

COXHEATH-CAMP:

A
NOVEL.

IN A SERIES OF LETTERS.

BY A LADY.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

DUBLIN:

PRINTED FOR MESSRS. PRICE, WHITESTONE, WILKINSON,
WILLIAMS, WALKER, E. CROSS, JENKIN, SLEATER,
MONCRIEFFE, W. WILSON, BURNETT, PORTER,
EISHAW, PRATTY, BURTON, HIGLEY,
and B. WATSON. M.DCCCXXII.

C

Hea
Son

at c
of I
ligh
I,
well
acqu
mon
you
tere
the
my
nica
hav
ever



C O X H E A T H :

A N O V E L.

L E T T E R I.

MILDMAY-HALL.

Heaven first taught Letters for some Wretch's Aid,
Some banish'd Lover, or some captive Maid.

—AND what a chasm, my dear madam, at certain periods would there be in the Annals of Friendship, unassisted by that divine, that delightful invention?

I, FOR example, who have long loved you as well as my sister can do, and am more intimately acquainted with you in a six days than she in a six months visit, must have languished to hear of your welfare, your amusements, your every interesting, your every entertaining occurrence; at the same time that I had borne with impatience my own exclusion from the possibility of communicating the changes and chances in a life, you have done me the honour to assure me will be ever more dear to you.

B

DEAR

DEAR to you!—By what tie, what cement?—Merely the liberality of your heart, and the benevolence of your temper?—Forbid it, Heaven! Forbid it, Love?—A little miracle as to the article of wealth will, I trust, soon be wrought in Ferdinand's favour;—since wealth is universally allowed to be the only requisite withheld from him, for making the marriage-state completely happy;—and then, let the old-ones or the wise-ones say what they may, you shall be my sister as well as my friend;—and we will challenge the Globe to produce such another blessed Trio.

I MUST, however, confess, that to bend the will to the will of a parent, is a beautiful sample of mental excellence in a young woman.—The youthful fancy will have its wanderings, and too frequently, perhaps, draw the youthful affections into embarrassments; but it is headlong inclination alone that is found irrestrainable; and, overturning both reason and conscience in its course, pushes on the fairest individuals to the foulest deeds—to the wounding of nature, and the violation of delicacy.—You are, thank Providence, a being of a superior order to this species of females;—and will either reconcile your duty and your love, or keep them in a state of honourable separation.

APPROPOS of Letters!—I never can touch on the subject without reviving my quarrel with my otherwise favourite Poet, for his prostitution of so invaluable a medium of social and affectionate intercourse.

To waft a sigh from Indus to the Pole may be innocently wished, and no less innocently effected;—but that a young damsel can spare her blushes by committing to paper for her Lover's perusal what would be unfit for a young damsel to utter,

is a tenet of so extraordinary a complexion, that I wish the propagator had been pleased to instruct us what to do with our consciousness; on the succeeding rencounter with a man who had thus received a likeness of us from our own pencil, we must have blushed to present him with a tête-à-tête. But it is a piece of masculine logic, equally unintelligible and repugnant to an elegant female mind; for an elegant female mind is incapable of departing from the dignity of *femininity* on any occasion, and knows but one language, the language of Purity—vulgarly called Prudence.

How unlucky it is that the Counties of our residence should be at the extremities of the Kingdom! — I have, however, as little to sigh for in Kent, except the pleasure of your company, as you in Somersetshire. — Mildmay-hall is most agreeably situated between Rochester and Maidstone, and in a genteel neighbourhood. It is, moreover, distant from Coxheath, where it is reported an encampment will soon be formed, from its vicinity to the coast, only eight miles; — a morning's airing. — Who then will be better enabled to remit you the news, the bustlings of the scene, than your humble servant? — Nay, provided you appear *sensible* of the *value* of such a Correspondent, it is not improbable but I may dip my pen in Scandal for your entertainment; wade through all the envy, malice, and uncharitableness, which is at once the origin and fuel of that fashionable device for passing away the time, and filling up the pauses, as it were, of existence; — a device grown into so great repute with the present generation, that it constitutes the seasoning, the high goût, not only of polite conversation, but polite literature: A certain proof, alas! of the false taste and fatal degeneracy of man-

ners which prevails in the land, to the extinction of all the illustrious virtues of our ancestors, and the dishonour of the British name.

I am, my beloved Girl,

Your affectionate,

ELEANORA, or,

[If you like it better,]

ELLA RIVERS.

LETTER II.

MILDMAY-HALL.

COXHEATH, my dear madam, is actually marked down for martial encampments, if not for martial prowess;—and Mrs. Mildmay laments the busy scenes that will be opened upon this part of the country:—but I leave you, who are well acquainted with the vivacity of my temper, to judge how differently I am affected by a confirmation of the glad tidings:—in a word, I consider it as the era of our animation.

A SOLDIER, if he happens to be a pretty fellow, has a thousand advantages over the rest of his sex. He is a gentleman, which is an infallible passport for him into the best company. He is a hero;—a hero who, perhaps, will soon be called upon to take the field in defence of the very circle he so agreeably entertains with his chit-chat:—he is therefore beheld with a mixture of approbation and gratitude by all his acquaintance.

ance. Nay more : — from connecting the remembrance of his dangers with the dangerous services he is about to engage in, he is perfectly adored by the women, who tremble, yet exult in the idea, that the man who so becomingly lays his heart at their feet, is ready to rush into all the perils of war for their preservation ; and hence it is that Soldiers are in general so successful, wherever they pay their devoirs.

AH me ! — I am, nevertheless, prohibited by the gentle, yet solemn because dying, request of my Mother, to think of a Soldier.

SHE, poor woman ! loved, and was beloved by a Military Character ; — and by sharing the fatigues, the distresses of his profession, could pronounce decisively on its incompatibility with human happiness.

MY father is, I will not say the ruins, but, the remains of a very handsome fellow. The air of his Countenance is Grecian — his hair auburn — his eyes the bright blue of the heavens — his mouth well-formed, and, in every sense of the word, well-furnished ; — and such the expression of the *tout ensemble*, that I can anticipate, if not the very terms, the very sentiment he is going to utter before they fall from his lips ; — add to all which, he is tall, and looks the hero.

HIS only fortune, however, was a Subaltern's Commission in a Marching Regiment ; — and though your Lovers are above taking so vulgar an article into their account of conjugal happiness, it is unfortunately as necessary to our existence, both married and single, that we should eat, as that we should breathe.

MY mother, at the age of susceptibility I have attained, had a mind soft as infant dreams, and as disinterested and credulous as it was tender. Her

Lover, poor infatuated man! gave the colourings of Arcadia to his descriptions of the felicity resulting from mutual affection and an union of hearts. No wonder, then, that to live for and with each other, was the object that dazzled their reason, and gave them courage to launch on the wide ocean of the World, unapprehensive of every worldly consequence.

THE pride of my father's family was wounded by his alliance with an amiable, though romantic young woman, who renounced the most flattering pecuniary prospects for his sake, — the favour of an uncle, who, in order effectually to punish her, married, and has now a whole house full of brats to inherit his treasures: He has, however, a termagant wife — is miserable — and I am contented.

WORLDLY want, my dear madam, when it cannot dissolve, embitters a tender attachment. — Every inconvenience my father felt, was more than doubled in my mother's feelings. She wept his unrewarded virtue — his unavailing heroism; and, accompanying him to America about nine years ago, bad adieu to what she called an insensible and ungrateful Land, because such merit as *her* Husband possessed was left exposed to the chilling blasts of Poverty, and suffered to wither in obscurity.

YET, between ourselves, though this honest pair could not command all their hearts might wish, they had no small obligations to Providence.

MRS. MILDMAY, the wife of a rich Planter, with whom my father had formed an intimacy when stationed in the days of his youth at Jamaica, happened to be in England at my birth, and intreated permission to be my god-mother. In the articles of protection and provision, I have, indeed,

indeed, scarcely known another parent ; for she generously undertook the care of my education, &c. in like manner as your father had done of Ferdinand's, on a similar principle, three years before.

Two children, out of three, thus amply provided for, gave them, no doubt, the highest satisfaction ; — whilst the sweet *Penferoso* the third followed them all the world over ; and if dutiful affection, tender attention, in a word, every filial, every soft endowment could delight the parental heart, her parents had unspeakable delight in her attendance upon them. — At length she was called upon to close my dear mother's eyes, who, as I have already mentioned, made it her dying request, that neither of her daughters should wed with Red-coats.

HERE I can conceive was deep, was substantial distress for the poor warrior : — He lost his friend, his companion, his every thing that was worth preserving, except his child, who *held him on the argument of life*, no less from gratitude than paternal fondness. She had become a voluntary exile to accompany him, and as voluntarily exposed herself to all the dangers of an untried climate, and the devastations of hostile scenes. — He looked on his departed wife, then on his weeping girl ; and recollecting how much she would have to fear from her sex, and unprotected condition, if he was no more, piously resolved to submit himself to the will of Heaven in the double duties of resignation, and care of his offspring ; — a recollection to which I verily believe I am indebted for the prolonged existence of my only parent.

BUT, with all my sister's goodness, I cannot help suspecting some American swain has got her

her by the heart-strings, the memory of whom contributes essentially to give those pensive traces to her countenance. — May the day not be far distant, that will render her as completely happy as she deserves to be !—Can I bless her more ?

If these family-anecdotes, which I have insensibly fallen upon, are familiar to you, pardon the repetition. — I lose my vivacity ; — it is not therefore extraordinary I should lose my remembrance, when they come across me.—But I have a notion that my sister's nerves are too tenderly strung to trust herself on the subject, and that my brother is still less inclined than her to entertain you with melancholy stories. — Be it as it may, however, I will wind up my account, if possible, for ever, with adding, that on Mr. Mildmay's death, and my father and mother's embarkation for the Western World, I was removed from school, and have from that time to this had no other check on the wildness of my imagination than my gratitude to my dear, my bountiful Benefactress, to whose bestowing hand I owe all I am, and from which I shall derive all I hope to be. And it is my pride and glory, that she has seldom had occasion to contradict me ;—for I read her wishes in her looks, and most religiously, to the utmost of my power, fulfil them.

BUT take notice, Mrs. Mildmay is no enemy to Red-coats, though abjured by my poor mother in the conclusion of her days ;—she does not therefore discourage me from admiring the martial address, martial mien, or martial character : — Yet, on casting up the pain of separations — though duly contrasted with the joy of reunions, the hazards of the field, loss of an eye, an arm, the life of the man we love—I execrate military enthusiasm ; deplore that the cockade and regimentals,

regimentals, which give such graces to the person, can alone be purchased at so high a price; and am resolved to shut the door of my heart, if I feel myself inclined to admit only a Hero to possess it; and the maternal injunction shall prove its invincible barricado.

I HOPE to hear from you soon,

And am, &c.

ELLA RIVERS.

LETTER III.

What's life without passion,
Sweet passion of love!

A CAMP, my dear madam, like a masquerade, levels all distinction: — General Officers and Cadets, Duchesses and Demoiselles, are alike exposed to the shafts of beauty, are alike susceptible of the tender passion.

WE read it from the pen of Sterne, that the whole city of Abdera was put into commotion by the representation of a piece which declared Cupid to be the Prince of Gods and Men; — and that wheresoever you met an Abderan, male or female, gentle or simple, “Cupid, Prince of Gods and Men,” was the stanza vibrating on their lips, at the same time that their hearts bore testimony to the justice of the title.

WHAT the people of Abdera experienced in their day, the whole County of Kent now expe-

riences;—and “Cupid, Prince of Gods and Men,” is as universally sung, though under another name;—for to captivate and be captivated is the secret purpose, — the secret desire of every heart. To this end the *Jeuneſſes* of each sex shake out their feathers, call up their best looks, and read the public prints with avidity; for in the public prints, the military resolutions and military motions are announced; and it is through that channel they will obtain the important information, when the Camp raree-show will commence: and such is the force of example, that if the expected beaux were not soldiers, I myself should be for trying the strength of my artillery on their affections. — And so much at present for the *Camp-influenza*.

Mrs. MILD MAY is now only five-and-thirty, though pretty far advanced in the ninth year of her widowhood. — She cannot with propriety be stiled a Beauty, but is the first-rate of the Agreeables, and mistress of a fine fortune. — Should she—But under all circumstances, and in all conditions, Mrs. Mildmay will be herself; — nor will I torture my imagination with bugbears. — Almost nine years, I repeat it, this most liberal-minded and engaging of women has been a widow, without distinguishing one male creature above another, except in the article of friendship; where my poor father, I assure you, has the apparent, the envied preheminance.

WHAT different Characters do we meet with in the Masculine World! — Some men construe civilities into invitations, most men resolve friendships into love.

My dear, modest father sees nothing but generous condescension and generous amity in all Mrs. Mildmay’s conduct towards him;—yet, as he knows Life and Mankind with a delicacy, I had

had almost said, peculiar to himself, he declines her most pressing invitations to make her house his home; and whatever private self-denial he may endure, visits her cautiously, addresses her reverently, and mentions her timidly, lest the busy, tatling Multitude should wound so uncommon a friend and benefactress, by imputing the *tendresse* of an old acquaintance, and the effusions of gratitude, for benefits received in the person of his little girl, to love.

I MUCH fear, however, was I my father, I should be tempted just to satisfy myself, whether it was *wisbed* I should move within so strict a line.—Our sex, my dear, are miserably circumscribed in this particular.—We must not break the ice; and a man of nicety will not, where the disparity of fortune is so glaring on his side, that the most disinterested passion must be liable to misconception. How you and my brother managed this point, you and my brother best know;—but I verily believe, so rigid is my father's virtue, that he would refuse the offer of this lady's person, because the immediate key to her wealth;—and in order to preserve his honour unsullied, supposing an union with him essential to her happiness, would wound his humanity, by leaving her a prey to a hopeless passion.

BUT I should tell you, all this is the mere wantonness of my own imagination, and the consciousness of my own infirmities;—for so absolutely am I under the dominion of “Cupid, Prince of Gods and Men,” that I consider acquaintance only as a first step to approbation—approbation to friendship—and friendship to love;—nay, admit the succession to be natural, to be irresistible, where there happens to be no moral impediments, as in my father and Mrs. Mildmay's

may's case ; though when I shall be called to speak experimentally on the subject, I am unable to conjecture.

You, my sweet girl, I am persuaded, would not condemn either the lady's taste or the lady's conduct, if she was even weak enough to make the choice I have hinted at ; as my brother, when we have said our best of him, is only second to his father in person, and every gentlemanly accomplishment.—His youth,—his youth, madam, is a mere feather in the scale, when it is remembered, men in general gain as much as women lose, by getting on the wrong side of thirty, in dignity of form, and gracefulness of complexion ; as a proof of which I need but refer you to the annals of Mythology,—where you will find Ulysses was admired by Calypso and the other Nymphs of antiquity, as much as his son could possibly be ; — or rather, that Telemachus's chief charms, in their eyes, was his striking resemblance of their beloved hero, his father.

Do, I beseech you, since Love is so near becoming the universal passion, consequently the universal topic, endeavour to unlock my demure sister's lips.—Make her either confess herself human, or prove her claim to divinity. But I am much mistaken, if she does not hide an aching heart behind her serenely-pensive countenance ; and, though not so frolicksome, has all the weaknesses of your ELLA's composition.

WHEN Ferdinand ascends the pulpit for the first time, how shall I wish to be one of his auditors !—he should have been christened LIONEL and you CLARISSA, there is such a similitude in your circumstances and situations ; tho' pardon

pardon me if I say, nothing but new-making Sir Ferdinand could render him a Sir JOHN FLOWERDALE, except in the article of being blind to the tender attachment which subsists between you.—Yet safe as you may be in that quarter, beware, my dear girl, of a discovery that must involve both your lover and yourself in unending distress. My father's discernment is accurate, his notions delicate, and his resolution firm. Not the eye of the basilisk would be more fatal to your life, than his penetrating eye to your passion. A thousand alarming consequences surround you; therefore I once more conjure you be on your guard, and let not my warning voice be upraised in vain.

I am,

With every friendly wish

for your happiness, &c. &c.

ELLA RIVERS.

LET

LETTER IV.

THE evil you apprehended is come to pass, and I am roused, most fatally roused from my fairy dream of happiness. — Your father, sister, brother, have taken their final leave of Sommersetshire. Their last adieus still vibrate on my ear, my heart. But my loss will be your gain. To your sister (from whom you will receive an early visit) I, however, refer you for particulars. — I am unable to write you ; yet one thing I must myself tell you, for she cannot.

Your father, no less undesignedly than unexpectedly, having walked into a parlour where your brother and I were talking over our hopes and our fears, instantly entered into the meaning of our tête-à-tête, and thus addressed us :

“FERDINAND, have I a Son ?”—The poor fellow trembled, bowed, and was silent.—“Retire then to my chamber, and there prepare yourself to receive my farther commands. Your mother’s death was the will of Heaven ; as such, I survived it : but if you love her memory or my life, beware how my honour dies by your hand.”—He withdrew without reply.

THEN turning to me : “You have no inconvenience, madam, to apprehend from this fortunate discovery. I will depart from your family without disturbing its repose. The orders I have just received to join my regiment, enables me to remove myself plausibly. But my removal of my son will expose me, I am well aware, to Sir Ferdinand’s displeasure and the charge of ingra-

“ ingratitude : I leave my fame, therefore, in
“ your hands ; with this request, that you will
“ never restore its bright polish at the expence of
“ your own peace, or, what I know to be equally
“ dear to you, your father’s. Let me be believed
“ for a time, the character I abhor, an ungrate-
“ ful man : It will be soon enough to do me
“ justice when you do justice to yourself, by
“ making a choice more worthy your fine sense
“ and high expectations. I pity Ferdinand ; for
“ I have not forgot how irresistible so amiable an
“ object must be to the youthful heart, and will
“ be every thing a fond parent can be to him, to
“ mitigate the pangs his sensibility will sustain :
“ but it is a glorious conflict, and I trust he will
“ be all the hero. Farewell ! and remember I am
“ cruel only to be kind. My life should be yours,
“ but my honour is not mine to bestow ; nay, the
“ forfeiture of it would disgrace you no less than
“ myself, as a very little reflection will convince
“ you ; nor can you deny me your esteem,
“ though I thus make a sacrifice of the pleasure
“ of your acquaintance.”—He left me, Ella,
with a look of tender compassion that rived my
soul,—and—But I can only add, that I am more
than ever

Yours, &c. &c.

CAROLINE FLETCHER.

LET

LETTER V.

ROCHESTER.

IT is my destiny, madam, and I submit without repining. The softer scenes of Life, I own, have peculiar charms for me, and I am more than ever unfitted, by the sweet tranquillity I have for these past six months enjoyed under your roof, for my present situation. But can I wish to be excused fulfilling the first and dearest of all duties—following, nay, I flatter myself, mitigating the fortune of a most beloved and indulgent father? There is the balm for every wound my inclinations may sustain; and I will be, what for his sake I ought to be, a little heroine, not a discontented Campaigner.

YOUR observation, that it is now too late in the day for my father to take the field as a Subaltern, proceeds from the natural liberality of your sentiments. The man, my good madam, who engages in a military life with nothing but his own merit to depend upon, has small chance for promotion. The *dangers* of an enterprize he must participate, but the *glory* is placed to the commander's account alone; unless, indeed, he happens to possess the happy talent of fawning and flattering, which are the only certain steps to favour in those public walks; where the report of the superior, made up of the reports of the superior's *friends*, is the criterion of worth, and the key to advancement.—But this is a gloomy subject, and I will pursue it no farther.

My brother, poor youth! begins to be more patient under his disappointments than I could have

have hoped; I tell him being in love becomes him; for, at every mention of your name, his cheek glows with a manly, I would not choose to say a beautiful tint; and if there is truth in inspiration his martial manœuvres will not disgrace his passion.

YET though I deny it to him, I will confess to you, it was pity to tear him from the pious election he had made and compel him to serve his King instead of his God. It was, nevertheless, in character for a brave and honest man to act as my father has done. The daughter of his benefactor might; unfinning, honour his child with the tenderest partiality; though it would have been criminal, alas! for that child to make other return to such condescension—than flying—to prove himself not utterly unworthy of it.

YOU lament, I will be bold enough to say unduly; Sir Ferdinand's turn of temper. Any other man's daughter and my brother, with all his imperfections on his head, would have been deemed by him not only an eligible, but a judicious choice; though his opinion would be totally changed, if the case was his own. For who, let me ask you, bestows a darling child, exquisitely accomplished, and mistress of a splendid fortune, on a *poor young fellow*, let his other endowments be what they may? or, indeed, on what motive could such romantic conduct be expected, unless it was the fashion of the times to consider poverty as the only security for moral rectitude, and that riches and goodness of heart could be proved incompatible things? As a mark of his sincerity towards us, was he not always giving us fame by bearing testimony to the wealth and good blood of our ancestors, and setting his friends an example of generous approbation, where our own

own little merits were the question? To have hoped for more at his hands, would have been the height of madness, ingratitude, and folly. From the above premises I therefore, for my part; not only acquit—I justify his sentiments, and, until Ferdinand attains to the dignity of a trunchon, shall never think him intitled to aspire to the honour of his alliance.—And so much for the tender passion.

THE farther from Jupiter, says the proverb, the farther from the thunder: —I therefore congratulate myself that the humility of my circumstances will exclude me from all intercourse with our great Commander. Condescension, madam, never sat on such a brow: his look is hostile—and his voice tremendous. No doubt, nevertheless, but he can unbend in *proper* company; and there may be *virtue* in keeping the lower ranks in awe.

MY dear father sighed involuntarily at breakfast this morning, and my eye spoke my desire to know the cause. A youth fit only to figure away on the Parade in St. James's Park, or make a brilliant appearance at a Review, was appointed his immediate superior.—Oh how did every wound he has received in the service of his Country, bleed afresh in my imagination at the tidings!—But I have learned to wonder in silence at the wrongs I have not the power to redress; and it is not in this world, I am now more than ever convinced my revered relation will meet with his reward.

MY sister and the most benevolent of women have made us a visit, and, it seems, flatter themselves they shall be able to soften the poor Lieutenant's destiny by their attentions; but his nice sensibility, I can perceive, is rather hurt than gratified by every increased obligation Mrs. Mildmay confers upon him;—nor will he be persuaded

to extend on interview with her beyond the limits common complaisance demands. There is some hidden cause for this mode of behaviour, which I am unable to penetrate. Great minds have not disdained in numberless instances to owe benefits to great minds; and who will deny Mrs. Mildmay's claim to that distinction? Moreover, in my humble opinion, her engaging vivacity and elegant familiarity are entitled to a far different return, unless reserve can be admitted as essential a quality in a soldier as in a Philosopher.

ELLA will write you all the news of our arrival at this same city of Rochester, from whence we are to proceed to the Heath.—It is her *forte*; and I should deprive her of a very particular pleasure, if I was to take the lead of her on that ground: I shall therefore only add, that Ferdinand intreats me to say the most respectful things for him.—Your imagination, however, can alone do justice to his feelings,—to which I must refer you,

And am,

Dear Madam,

Your most obliged

Humble servant,

LYDIA RIVERS.

LET.

LETTER VI.

MILDMAY-HALL.

Now we're free to sing and play;
Over the hills and far away.

THE gentle Lydia tells me the field is all open before me, for that not one description has fallen from her pen of the scenes she is now cast in. *Quelle tristesse! quelle insensible!*—But the truth is, from the constitutional difference in our tempers, I contrive to gather all the roses, she all the thorns of existence.

MRS. MILDMAY and myself arrived early this morning at Rochester, and were much entertained by the coming-in of the troops and baggage-waggons, until, on the stopping of one of them just under the window at which we stood, we perceived a young and really elegant appearing woman in the last struggles of nature. We rang the bell, besought the people to give her the best and most speedy help they could obtain, and promised to answer every consequential expence.

SHE was taken down from the waggon in the gentlest manner possible by a fellow whose countenance bespoke his warm interest in her safety, and who seated her in a chair in the open air. A surgeon, whose ready attendance did honour to his humanity, bled her; whilst the young recruit, for a recruit we discovered him to be by his cockade, hung over with tender anxiety. Such a face at such a moment, would not have disgraced the pencil

pencil of a Guido !—She opened her, I dare believe once fine, eyes—fixed them upon his—sighed—laboured at articulation—feebly pressed his hand—and—expired.—We paid her, all-humble as her situation was, the tribute of a tear ;—ordered her to be conveyed to a house, we bribed to admit her body till it could be put in the ground ;—and soothed the desponding youth, who accused himself as the author of her untimely fate.—It was fatigue—it was want of proper subsistence that had hastened her dissolution—it was her fears that he would be sent abroad—in fine, it was love. We gave him a couple of guineas, and he retired in disconsolation, having first obtained leave to walk over from the Camp to see her buried ; in which request he was unwillingly indulged, as it was considered only a renewal of his sorrow.—But he burst into tears at the hesitation—said he would bury all his sorrows in the grave with her, and return to his duty like a man ;—then hiding his eyes with his hands, he withdrew to give vent to his apparently overcharged heart.—Tell me then, my sweet Caroline, is not Cupid the sovereign prince of at least this lower world ?

WE had scarcely got over this little incident, than an alarm was spread, that a poor woman in another of the waggons was in labour, and unless removed must be lost.

MRS. MILD MAY, or the Goddess of Benevolence under her form, (for you must know I often suspect she must be that Divinity) flew again to the window, and holding a purse in her hand, was understood to wish every necessary should be done for the poor wretch's accommodation, who, it seems, run all hazards rather than be left behind the man she loved. The business was soon over,

over, the birth of a fine boy announced, and Mrs. Mildmay sent word she would stand godmother, if a substitute could be provided; so that I look upon it, it will prove a babe of grace, by being born under such fortunate auspices. — For have I not found her a parent from that tie alone? Nor will she ever forsake the helpless, the innocent, or the friendless.

THE town now began to fill with great rapidity. Every public-house had its share of company, according to its own rank, and the rank of its guests; dinner was set on every table; and the fife and drum proclaimed the officers quarters—except, indeed, the highest of the high, who forbade this martial parade, and eat his sullen meal in all the dignity of *silence*.

OUR minds being by this time somewhat harmonised, we took a ride to the martial spot, where the things were in much forwardness for the reception of the then arrived troops: — the mountains, or rather furrows, were levelled, as was foretold, by the industry of the soldiers; — and such is the resort already to this beginning Camp, that a small ale-house on the frontiers of the Heath, (which is, by the bye, seven miles in circumference) was lifted into so great consequence, that happy was the He or She who had sufficient interest to procure a seat, or other equally capital article of accommodation.

BUT I should tell you, it is the *ton* for the Ladies to take their morning-airings on the Heath, dressed in a kind of regimental jacket and petticoat, with a hat and feather, not forgetting a cockade. It is clear to me, this Amazonian appearance was devised by some confident Beauty, who secretly laughs at the folly of her sister-females

males for being led by the nose in an article of dress which, though calculated perhaps to heighten the charms of a fine woman, most assuredly aggravates the defects of a homely one.

THE first who started *en militaire* in this part of the world, was a brace of Duchesses, in a low phaeton drawn by ponies; and I'll assure you, they smacked the silken thong with the air described by the poet: nor could I forbear exclaiming, on beholding them, in the words of Dr. Young,

Sesostris-like, such Charioteers as these

Might drive six harness'd Monarchs, if they please.

But as I take it for granted, my father will set his face against my being equipped in this high stile of fashion, I have provided myself *un habit* neither red nor blue, nor lapelled nor belaced, but of the purest white, with a *chapeau* the simplest imaginable;—and, in despite of all example, shall wear my hair in a state of nature—that is, without wool or powder, having a sufficient quantity to enable me to decline every artificial addition; though I shall be cautious how I confess as much, lest the mark of low-breeding should be set upon me.

I SUPPOSE I need not tell you, that the Regulars, as well as Militia, form their several corps into streets, distinguished by their name, or county, in which the tents are arranged with proper marks of subordination, till they rise to the marches, before the entrance of each of which, in proportion to the consequence of the owner, Chinese railings are erected, together with many little strokes of ingenuity that improve the general appearance.

THE

THE horses are, moreover, tied in lines to pickets before the men's tents, where they are littered down at nights, and have a kind of awning extended from their master's covering, to defend them from the weather. The tractability of these creatures in all their manœuvres is astonishing, when it is remembered what fire and spirit they are fraught with, and display in the hour of action.

THE Ladies who follow the Camp, I mean the trampers, are not permitted to sleep in the tents, but have huts provided for their accommodation at some distance: they appear, however, to me to be a most valuable martial appendages; for it is to their labours the poor fellows owe all the conveniences of their situation; and the contest seems to be, which shall excel the others in spruceing up their hero for exercise.

THE children that accompany these itinerant helpmates are healthful and lovely; — and many a *cara sposa* is now on the point of tumbling into the straw, as the Coxheath phrase is for *une accouchée*: but all this is so much in the common practice of the world, that it neither disturbs nor startles any one: it is the dead and dying alone that calls the mind home, and awakens the most latent feelings of humanity.

My sister, who has seen such sights as I hope my eyes will be ever more spared—the ravages of war, and the carnage of a field of battle—goes deeper into the affair: Tears steal silently down her cheeks, she shakes her head with unutterable compassion, and sighs forth some soft and secret regrets of her own. But we will bring her to confession before it is long, nor suffer her, cormorant-like, to devour all her griefs without our participation.

ON

VOL.

ON casting a look back on what I have written, I find this Letter cannot be called a *bouquet*; or, at best, the roses I have this day gathered for you are not without thorns; but I am determined, in order to preserve my volatility, henceforth to see this encampment in no other light than an exhibition of our national strength, and a rehearsal of feats of prowess, to keep the hands of our summer-heroes in.

WOULD to Heaven our *magnus Apollo* had been made of more *penetrable stuff*! But I pronounced decisively on his character, when I learned he was an enemy to harmony — martial harmony, — the heart-stirring trumpet, and the heart-enlivening fife and drum; and forbade their playing, according to the military custom, whilst he *was set to dine*. Shakespeare has, however, put a mark on such men, which is no less infallible than indelible.

Adieu,

My dear Madam,

And believe me to be, &c.

ELLA RIVERS.

LETTER VII.

CRUEL Ella, and no less cruel Lydia! Is it possible your own sensibility should not instruct you, that however Camp descriptions might amuse a mind at ease, they can afford little pleasure to a heart like mine?

My father is outrageous in his resentment, and most unfortunately directs it all against the innocent head. Your father might be capricious, unreasonable, tyrannical; but Ferdinand—his own Ferdinand, that grew up on his knee, and was cherished in his bosom—to steal away—cast off his protection—insult his tenderness!—May he perish, if he ever pardons him his base, his cool-blooded ingratitude.

LANGUAGE such as this is my sole entertainment morning, noon, and evening. I dare not weep—I dare not plead the cause of injured virtue—or disabuse the abused: Yet, when I seek consolation from your letters, instead of the anxiously-desired intelligence——(I blush to write it—you might have kindly spared my blushes) of the poor, banished Ferdinand, “He begins,” says Lydia, “to bear his disappointment with more patience than I could have hoped.”—Oh tell me! How did he support, endure, demonstrate his impatience? If Lydia has loved, she has either forgot the passion, or she has survived her humanity.—But you, Ella! what is become of the congeniality of mind we boasted? Could I—do you, can you think I could have treated you thus?

My

My father is so far just in the midst of his wrath that he allows me to correspond with the unoffending girls, as he calls you and your sister; and adds, that, thank Heaven! children are not answerable for the pride, the insolence, or folly of their fathers. There is liberality in the distinction; and I am pleased it has not escaped his feelings.

If Ferdinand, however, can be brought to forget, to renounce me, I shall not complain. My tender anxiety respecting him, if there is faith or truth in woman, arises from my idea of what he suffers for my sake. That my fortune is superior to his, is an accident: his merit will always entitle him, however, to look up as high, nay higher, than any thing I possess; and should he be ambition-struck—I abjured the thought, and despise myself for wronging him even in imagination—will live for him, and him alone:

For I, of all mankind, can love but one.

PITY and forgive my petulance, my dearest girl. My situation is a distressed one, my mind a weak one; but my affection for you is undiminished, unshaken;—our friendship shall be exemplary, though our relationship may be prohibited by the stern will of fate, as well as by the stern will of Fathers. Write to me immediately; for your letters afford all the pleasure I now hope for, or can taste.

I am, &c.

C. FLETCHER.

LETTER VIII.

Of all afflictions taught a Lover yet,
 'Tis sure the hardest science to *forget*.

W^HY will you seek the painful satisfaction of reading a truth your heart must be well assured of, viz. that poor Ferdinand is one of the most constant, sighing, pining lovers in the creation; that he walks abroad with arms folded, eyes rivetted on the ground, and his whole soul so totally engrossed by his tender reveries, that you may run bolt against him without his perceiving you, or call loud enough to wake the dead, before he is roused to attention! Are you content, or shall I add, that all the Demoiselles resorting to this spot, though set off to the best advantage both in dress and looks, are dowdies in his estimation; their voices discord; their conversation nonsense; their sentiments idle; and their conduct absurd, when compared with the Goddess of his idolatry.—And thus do I wind up the bottom of my account; for, believe me, the laws of the Medes and Persians were not less capable of changing, than his attachment of diminution.

LAST night arrived at the Camp *un beau Chevalier*—the new made Captain, my dear Madam, of my father's Company, who is now three-and-twenty, and about to enter on his first campaign; Mr. Rivers, his Lieutenant, being *only* twenty-three years his senior, and what may justly be styled a veteran soldier. No matter: Captain Melvin is a very pretty fellow, and the *most* worthy the rank he has attained, of any Officer within the

the whole circle of my acquaintance, as you yourself shall Judge.

MRS. MILD MAY had brought me to the Heath, and Lydia was pouring out our tea, when a drummer presented himself to announce the young Commander, who politely waited in my father's watch box for leave to speak with him.

MY father sighed—Mrs. Mildmay blushed a blush of generous indignation—and Lydia and I felt, with the keenest sensibility, for the feelings of our revered relation.—“This is a favour I little expected,” said my father, leading in his blooming guest; “it was my part”——

“I CAN hear no more,” replied Melvin.—
 “All men, my good Sir, must submit, with the best possible grace, to their condition :—but I shall always be ashamed of the nominal superiority I am placed in, to an Officer of your known merit and experience. If you can, however, behold me without resentment—separate the individual from the deed—I would solicit the honour of your friendship; on these only terms, that you found my ambition to form myself by your instruction and example, as giving me some little claims to such a condescension.—You have a son, I understand, nearly my age : Let us be your pupils ; teach us not to disgrace the profession we have started in ; save me from the contempt I must otherwise incur with good minds, by suffering me to call you my guardian and preceptor ; and, above all, shew me you can be as gracious as you are good, by admitting me to an instant equality, a social intercourse with you and yours.”

THE air, the manner accompanying these words was affecting, was irresistible. My father and Mrs. Mildmay extended each a hand, in token of approbation, in token of amity: my brother, softened by the scene, embraced him with the affection of a brother;—and Lydia and I made room for him to sit between us.

HE was delighted. A dish of tea, intended for Ferdinand, stood near him: he helped himself with the ease and confidence of intimacy; and looking round, “I never felt myself at home,” said he, “till now. Your children, Mr. Rivers, have been brought up in all the felicity of paternal endearment. I have obligations of a different sort to my father. He has liberally provided for me. If fortune could atone for the want of every tender, every reverential, every exemplary relationship, I should have nothing to complain of; but I would this moment exultingly exchange my possessions for the treasures your children can boast—A brother, sister, a father!—Tell me, Sir, what can money purchase to soothe, to satisfy, to touch the heart like those endearing relations?”

YOU must know, this uncommon creature, this black swan, is the natural son of a Mr. St. Alban, an East Indian of immense wealth, and was born abroad.

HIS mother he never saw, and has little or no remembrance of his father, being sent over to England for education at a very early age; and had scarcely attained his ninth year before Mr. St. Alban died, and left him five-and-twenty thousand pounds. At school he contracted a taste for the army, and is pushing forward for a truncheon.—Now will I give you right wholesome advice. Ferdinand is a *poor fellow* in every sense of the word,

word, when compared with this phenomenon:—make, therefore, a transfer of your heart in Melvin's favour, and let me alone for bringing matters to bear between you.

THIS mention of his birth was evidently designed to lift us into consequence with ourselves, and facilitate the familiarity he aspired to. Mrs. Mildmay is in raptures with him; my father is infinitely pleased with him, the young Cadet is happy with him; and Lydia and I are become rival-sisters on his account. Here is ample scope for adventure!

THE Cadet and his new friend walked forth at length to reconnoitre, and Mrs. Mildmay took her leave. The ride was the shortest we had ever known it; for we reached Mildmay-hall, my dear, before we had half finished the account of our mutual surprize and mutual joy to find, at so degenerate a period as our moral Writers represent the present, so amiable a character as Melvin's. On my conscience, I believe my sweet benefactress forgets she is upwards of thirty, and means to become a candidate with your young friends: the contest will be a warm one.

THIS is a dawn of such felicity as we could not have hoped for.—Ferdinand has now a most agreeable companion; my father, an indulgent, a respectful superior;—our little dinner and tea-parties will be enlivened; Mrs. Mildmay can make Melvin fifty presents for my father's participation, without wounding his delicacy;—we girls shall have a swain who will think himself honoured, all-humble as our situation is, by our notice; and I shall be furnished with many a lively tale for the amusement of my friend, to which I must otherwise have been a stranger.—Oh! it was a

white hour, Madam, the hour of his arrival at Coxheath! and for such have I marked it down on my tablet. — Adieu! for having finished my subject, I will finish my epistle,

And am yours, &c.

ELLA RIVERS.

LETTER IX.

A KNIGHT-ERRANT without a mistress, says honest Sancho Pancha, is like a tree without leaves; in like manner a Soldier—the Knight-errant of our modern times: no wonder, then, Melvin should be in a hurry to complete his martial character by falling in love with—Lydia.

HER features, I grant you, are not to be resisted; so soft, so penetrating is the sensibility by which they are animated: methinks, however, it is pity so fine a fellow should obtain but half a heart in return for his first and unreserved attachment. It was her *destiny*, you know, to love the loveliest of his sex in the American World, and there is no restoring the original tone to the once-engaged affections.

IT happens, my dear madam, on this occasion, that you are mistaken.—Lydia is not the lady of Melvin's wishes.—Mrs. Mildmay's—well-thrown conjecture.—Mrs. Mildmay is every thing that is amiable in woman;—an elegant person, an accom-

accomplished mind, a capital fortune.—I am sorry she is a widow; and that the disparity of age should be so mortifying on her side, yet as I don't see he can do better, Heaven, I say, send them all imaginable happiness!

PROVOKING girl!—So you would not remember me?—I am younger even than Lydia, and have more vivacity than even Mrs. Mildmay:—why, therefore, should you take it in your head, that the demure damsel or the matron had all the chances in their favour?—It was malicious—it was a studied piece of disregard—it was envy—it was insult—it was—But why should I trouble myself to characterise the action, when I have it in my power to punish it by—telling you—I—yes, madam, I, ELLA RIVERS, am the object of the handsome, the noble, the rich, the gay Capt. Melvin's choice, admiration, and attachment.

HE would have declared himself to me in form; but I am so apprehensive of my father's delicacy proving an impediment, that I will contrive to make him move within the friendly line till the breaking up of the campaign, and that his friends are set down at their ease in winter quarters, when they may talk the business over at their leisure.—Besides, my dear madam, he should endeavour to inform himself, whether the good humour he so much admires in me is genuine or artificial—constitutional or local.—Perhaps I may be found a very dull companion in a chimney-corner, though so *de-agée* in the field, where every thing conspires to keep one alive and merry—the fife, the drum, the ball, the social circle, the frequent sips one takes of that sweet cordial flattery. But he makes a point of shewing me he is rash enough to try experiments, if not restrained by my wisdom and liberality.

JEALOUS eyes, they say, see double; hence I suppose it was that I could not persuade myself Lydia was insensible to Melvin's merit;—I therefore, for her peace-sake, and my own honour, did not hesitate a moment what part to act, when the sweet fellow laid his heart at my feet. I repeated to her *verbatim* the conversation we had had together; concluded with thanking God my approbation of him had not run away with my sisterly affection, and that she had only to speak what she wished he should be to me.

“ELLA,” replied this sentimental girl, “as I have never yet told you the state of my heart, I accept the offer you now make with the liveliest gratitude. But Captain Melvin is all your own: I esteem, I revere his noble-mindedness:—he is the most perfect of human beings; and I congratulate you on your favourable prospects. —I would say more——Pity my wakeness;—and since you have by this stroke of unreserved confidence and kindness intitled yourself to a knowledge of all my concerns, you shall receive it.—But my pen must speak for me:—I can write, though I cannot utter the melancholy——Our friend too, I am certain, would be pleased by a communication.—It will save you a letter;—you shall therefore inclose what I will present you with to morrow morning, for her perusal.—Give Melvin every distinction his merit claims, and may my father's consent sanctify your tender friendship!—You deserve to be, and, I trust, Ella, you will be happy!”

POOR thing! my heart bleeds for her!—I always suspected her of a secret attachment, but am unable to devine what deep shades hang over her

h
th
th

An

an
pie
M
ed)
E
day
que
mar
mar
spe
of ga
ing u
from
H
tion c
ear,
with
he loc
sion to
to ma
you sh
Mildm
be her
would
Lieute
At
myself

her destiny. Being already, however, apprised of their hue, I will (with your good leave) dedicate the remainder of my paper to Euphrosyne.

Come, thou Goddess, fair and free;
In Heaven ycleped Euphrosyne !

And so much by way of invocation.

MELVIN had the address to give the credit of an elegant ball to his brother-officers, though the piece of gallantry was all his own.

MRS. MILDMAÏ, my father (but he declined), Ferdinand, and his sisters were invited.

BUT I should first tell you, we had dined the day before *en militaire* in that gentleman's marquise. Our table was covered, at the sounding of martial music; every toast was received with martial plaudits; and we constituted a very pretty spectacle for metropolitan curiosity; whole troops of gapers passing and repassing the door, and envying us our festive interval, our momentary relaxation from the toils of the field.

HERE the ball was announced, and the invitation circulated;—whilst Melvin whispered in my ear, his presumptuous hopes of being honoured with my hand. I turned my eyes full upon him; he looked down with such humility, such submission to my sovereign will, that I could not refuse to make him happy.—Ferdinand—it is proper you should know it—tendered his services to Mrs. Mildmay, who promised, if she danced, he should be her man.—Lydia pleaded a head-ach, and would not be of the party, but staid to bear the Lieutenant company.

AT the appointed hour, Mrs. Mildmay and myself arrived at the place of rendezvous, dressed

at all points, and with hearts bent on conquest Ferdinand and Melvin behaved very gallantly on the occasion; and I, your friend, had the *elate* of opening the ball with the lord of the feast, Captain Melvin. He resigned me to an acquaintance of his for my second minuet, with a compliment I do not sufficiently remember to do it justice on paper: I shall, therefore, only tell you, it was very sensible, very insinuating, and all *that*. A few cotillons were danced, but the general voice was for the old custom of Old England; and I and my partner went thro' with great spirit all the busy bustling of "Over the hills and far away," and "Kate of Aberdeen," before we filed off to the bottom of the room to take breath.

I COULD perceive some interesting matter hung on Melvin's lips he was unable to get off; and as music calculated to awaken the tender passions, I could not forbear, I fear, being a little encouraging in my behaviour; for he at length made me sensible, that he should thenceforth *live* only for me, and pressed me to say my heart had no pre-engagement.—I answered like a heroine, my father was master of it.

HE replied, with the piety of Æneas, he asked no favour but as he might "come recommended by Mr. Rivers."

I SHUDDERED at the recollection of Mr. Rivers's *Catonian* virtues, and how you was smarting under the exertion of them; and, as the last effort of self-regard, intreated him to forbear every mention of his favourable sentiments of me while we remained in that quarter of the world.

HE promised implicit obedience on *one* condition,

I YIELD-

I YIELDED of necessity, and suffered him to kiss my hand, as a kind of sealing the implied contract between us, and he seemed to tread air all the ensuing evening.

MRS. MILD MAY having picked up a fourth person to their mind, drew off Ferdinand to a quadrille-table—what half-souled beings!—whilst we footed it till midnight; when adjourning to Mildmay-Hall, we drank our coffee, and separated on our several callings—our beaux to their exercise, and us belles to sleep, with a comfortable dose of which we indulged ourselves, insomuch that it was mid-day before we arose.

OUR company consisted of twelve ladies and twelve gentlemen dancers, nine of whom, on my honour, were Captain Brazens, two Mr. Worthys, and one Captain Plume.

THE play of the Recruiting Officer entered my head, you must know, at supper, when the rattling tongue of saucy eloquence began to strike hard on my ear; and here appeared to me so happy a similitude in some respects of the scenes I was engaged in, that, for distinction-sake, I christened my sparks Captain John, James, Robert, Charles, Richard, and Stephen Brazen, according to their names; Melvin, Captain Plume; and my brother and another young fellow, Ferdinand and Frank Worthy; by which appellation I shall make free to mention them, as occasion may require or authorize. I, moreover, resolved on the spot to look about me in Camp for Serjeant Kite's deluded bumpkins, and country girls forward to be undone by noble Captains; nor do I despair (except in the person of Justice Balance) of filling up the whole groupe.—Take notice, I myself am the Sylvia of the piece;—

Mrs.

Mrs. Mildmay, Melinda ;—and as for the other ladies, they shall not have the honour of being introduced on the same ground with females of my friendship and family.

WE are to have a concert of vocal and instrumental music in my Captain Plume's marquee, in which I shall bear a part ; but I am debating with myself, whether the *pesoroso* or the *allegro* is most adapted to my voice ; and that I may secure myself from all errors in judgment, shall take Lydia's opinion before I determine.—Sweet Lydia !—It checks my giddy vivacity to remember she is now, perhaps, weeping over past scenes, and preparing to rob both you and me of some sympathetic tears.—Yet is it sufficient to hold ourselves in readiness to share communicated sorrows ; we should be suicides in happiness, to wound our repose by those which are imaginary. I will instantly remit you her tale of woe, without preface or comment ; for, if I mistake not, it will be trebly acceptable, to any thing I could offer ;

Though I am

So sincerely and affectionately your

ELLA RIVERS.

L E T.

L E T T E R X.

YOU have repeatedly, my dear sister, thrown out hints, that you believed my affections were not my own.—You have good reason for your suspicions; but you shall read the history of my heart.

ABOUT four years ago, when the American became the hostile scene, my father being stationed with a little corps of observation in a village, my mother and I, for the pleasure of his company, took up our residence in the neighbourhood.

WE three, a social and happy circle, had just finished an early supper one evening, when a man who had run himself out of breath, and was covered with blood, rushed into the room.—My father started—my mother and I hastily demanded whence he came?—

“Most merciful sir!” cried he, disregarding us women,” fly and save my master’s life! His house is now surrounded either by Indians or ruffians.—Surrounded did I say? They must by this time be got in, and are, perhaps, butchering all its inhabitants.”—This was enough! My father snatched up his sword; gave the word for assembling his little forces; pressed us—all-weeping as we were—in his arms; and followed the guidance of the poor fellow, who, it seems, had by stratagem made his escape, after receiving a slight wound on his head.

THINK, my ELLA, think what an interval we experienced. — We knew my father’s humanity equalled his courage, and that he would expose himself far beyond the letter of his duty to defend the distressed.

IN less than an hour he returned—and returned unhurt—with a youth to all appearance dead, borne on a feather-bed by some soldiers, who, by my father's orders, laid him down before us, and retired.

“HERE,” said he, “is exercise for your tenderness, your goodness of heart!—He has only fainted from loss of blood, lost in a father's cause.—We must revive him.”

MY mother understood these matters.—I supported his head, whilst she applied things to his temples, the palms of his hands, and his feet; and, to her great satisfaction, was so far successful, that he opened his eyes, and by degrees recovered himself so as to be able to have his wounds dressed—for he had received several—and was lodged with the utmost tenderness under our roof.

IT is supposed that rapine was the sole purpose of the attack, as the house was stripped of all its valuables; but what is not so clearly comprehensible is, that having overcome the son (who threw himself before his father and the assassins), and, as they believed, finished him, they made a prisoner of the old gentleman, and had dragged him away before my father could arrive.—He, however, prevented much carnage; for they declared they would scalp every individual, not even sparing the youth they had beheld a martyr to filial piety; and then set the place on fire.—They fled at the appearance of the troops.

MR. WILSON was deeply affected at his father's fate, and seemed to consider death as more eligible than bondage; though he would often say, “I am proud, Sir, of being your prisoner:”—an address which never failed to involve these two most generous of men in a warm altercation;—

cation ;—my father insisting upon it, he had acted as his deliverer only ;—Wilson affirming, he had made himself master of his liberty.

So soon as he was perfectly recovered, he besought my father to let him bear arms under him. —“ I am ambitious,” he would say, “ of one day rendering some of my species a similar service to that I have experienced. It is a glorious exertion of human courage to preserve a life, and check the devastations of savages ! — Your example shall be my lesson of instruction.”

My father gave him a sword, and leave to use it ; but forbade his confining himself to the military profession. —“ We must not,” said he, “ mistake the effusions of gratitude and benevolence for choice.—Besides, who knows how soon the paternal authority may mark you out a new course !” —At these words I perceived he would look tenderly on me.—I leave you to judge, Ella, what was my object of contemplation, when I made that discovery.

VERY many skirmishes happened with the Americans, in one of which my father received a ball in his side.—This youth was his companion ; but though he evermore acted agreeably to his duty, it was apparent the safety of his benefactor was his greatest concern.—“ In pity to your family (he would say) spare yourself, where you can with propriety, and let me have the honour of fulfilling your wishes. I am enured to danger.—I shall not disgrace you by shrinking—Bring me to the proof.—You know not what I can do in your service.”

His affectionate attention was such to my mother, that she seemed to forget he was not her own child ; — and such his brotherly regard for me, that

“ceived.—Assure yourself I am incapable of every such mistaken, such cruel kindness—he will be here in a few hours.”

“HOURS ! Mark that, my lost girl !—What must his condition be to move on so slowly ?—This, this delay is worse to me than death !”

THE good, the tender fellow exhausted his utmost eloquence in her support : he begged her, even on his knees, to be composed for all our sakes to be composed.—She endeavoured to oblige him ; but smiled through her tears, when she did smile, and could not conceal the smarting anguish of her heart.

At length, a noise was heard.—She was for flying to meet her husband ; and so great was her strength for the time, that we could scarce restrain her.—He was brought into her room, pale—and speechless ; when, contrary to our expectation, she made no effort to rise, but viewed him with a fixed, an agonizing attention. Nature, in her whole tragic drama, never drew such a scene.

WILSON pressed my hand—a flood of tears seemed to lighten my weight of affliction.—A surgeon attended.—My mother’s fever, he said, had seized her brain, and my father’s wound was mortal.

WE knew not how to divide ourselves ; but Wilson apprehending more terror for me from my mother’s delirium, when it should come to its height, than from my father’s silent suffering, insisted upon my being his nurse, whilst he superintended the nursing of the woman he almost revered.

My father slept till morning, and was much refreshed. He asked in a low voice for Wilson—his wife.—The surgeon luckily came in before I could

could answer ; and telling him his safety depended on his being kept quiet, he consented I alone should sit by him.

My mother's disorder took a very different turn to what was expected. Instead of frenzy, she fell into stupefaction : the spring of her nerves was broken by anxiety ; her heart-strings were rent by grief :—she languished without remedy for several days, before my father was judged fit to bear the melancholy tidings.

WILSON approached the bed-side softly ; but my father was aware of him.—He held out his hand—the hand that had saved his young friend's life.—He kissed it—he sat down by him, and I retired. But, my dear Ella, I only exchanged one sick room for another ; though all my attendance on our mother was deemed unnecessary by those about her, as she was altogether insensible of it.—But when nature came to its last struggle, what a change did it produce ! She was collected, composed ;—she bid me listen to the few words she had to say to me—her dying request, she added—her departing injunction.

“ As you would shun a precipice, beware of
 “ loving a soldier. It will be the death-stroke of
 “ your peace ! — My tender and lively affection
 “ for your father has as effectually destroyed me,
 “ as a sword or a pistol could have done. — Bear
 “ testimony of all you hear and see to your sister.
 “ — Tell her she is included in my blessing, my
 “ prayers—and oh that I could but have taken a
 “ last farewell of your father ! ”

My father heard this exclamation, and would be instantly conveyed, tho' at the hazard of his existence, into her apartment.—She clasped her hands together—she threw herself on his neck—she blessed him—and expired.—But he was spared

the

the mo
 hour
 die of
 and a

Wi
 ing the
 or rath
 as such
 tune. —

our sig

His

respect

great

we love

joined

thinking

and blo

—This

most re

It w

abroad,

of litter

thought

oblique,

conclud

In all

garde du

our re-u

ing—wh

father's

presente

by Wilso

on, alas

WAT

no imag

very foo

every

the most deadly portion of his sorrow ; for to this hour he believes she died of a fever.—She did die of a fever ; but it was the fever of anguish and a broken heart.

WILSON took every office on himself respecting the funeral. He had fought as a Volunteer, or rather, voluntary attendant on my father, and as such claimed his privilege of following his fortune.—He made haste to bury our dead out of our sight.

His conversation, and the arguments he used respecting the paternal duty, contributed in a great measure to preserve our father. He saw we loved ;—he pitied, he excused us ;—he enjoined us not to add affliction to affliction, by thinking of an union under such auspices as war and blood-shed, but wait patiently for better days.—This was all the indulgence we hoped for ; and most religiously did we make his will our law.

It was two months before my father could go abroad, and he was then only conveyed in a kind of litter. The ball had grazed his lungs, it was thought, by his surgeons ; but its passage was oblique, and by his perfect recovery, I must conclude they were mistaken.

IN all these little excursions Wilson was his *garde du corps*.—Our partings were frequent, and our re-unions uninterrupted, until one fatal morning—when can I write it ?—he was missing in my father's little train ;—his supporting arm no longer presented itself :—alone, unaccompanied, at least by Wilson, he entered his dwelling, where Wilson, alas ! never entered more.

WATCHINGS such as happy minds can form no image of, did I experience !—I heard him in every footstep, and tried to trace out his features in every approaching individual.—Had he been

cut

cut off in battle—had he been the prey of wild beasts, or, what is yet worse in my idea, the prey of Savages, the certainty of his fate, the ending of his life would have been a blessed ending of my sorrows.—But whether living or dead, he is still dear to me,—and I still must weep his loss.—I ask of Heaven, Ella, in its utmost mercy, only to permit me to discover, that—he is no more.

NEED I now bespeak your pity or forbearance?—Jests are stabs to the wounded mind.—May you be ever, ever happy, prays your

LYDIA RIVERS!

LETTER XI.

Since thou art deny'd to my heart,
What bliss can hereafter be mine?

POOR Lydia!—How you must blush, my dear madam, at your impatience under your light disappointments, when weighed against her deep, her trying affliction! Your lover not only lives, but declaredly lives for you. He lives in the esteem of all his acquaintance—in health, in peace (for ours is only a holiday-Camp), in safety; breathes the same air with you, inhabits the same kingdom, and almost every succeeding post brings you tidings of him from mine or Lydia's pen;—yet have you wept, and lamented his

his loss, as if seas; and Savages, and every formidable, every death-bearing calamity were the barriers between you.—Read, then, I beseech you, read my gentle and uncomplaining sister's account of what she had endured, and still endures, and learn resignation.

THERE is yet another of the Brazens that I must take leave to introduce to your acquaintance; but he, my dear, is a Lord—so you will less wonder at his title. And that I may not confound him with the Captain James, the Captain Charles, or the other before-recited noble Captain Brazens, I will omit his military addition, and call him Lord Brazen only.

A COACH-FULL of London ladies arrived somewhat unexpectedly, and somewhat late last night at Mildmay-Hall. One of them was tolerably well-known to Mrs. Mildmay, the others entire strangers; but they were women of family and fortune, and the least agreeable of the whole party *sister* to a Lord. —The Lord bless them!—How little did that relationship avail her in our good opinion; for it is the sterling, the intrinsic merit of the individual that is the only currency with us, the only passport to our approbation.

My Lord's sister not having had an Earl or a Marquis for her father, was, however, obliged to content herself with plain *Miss*, in the same manner as your humble friend—Miss Brazen;—for we will graciously give her the family-name, together with all its honours and hereditaments; for my Lord, her boasted brother, has all the pride, all the ill-nature, all the stare, and all the strut of *all* the Brazens; from which marks my Lord's sister fully proves her legitimacy and rightful claims to the blood of the Brazens.—I hope, by this time, you are sufficiently mistress of their characters

acters and persons to enter into their future concerns with pleasure and *feeling*, if *required*.

THE ladies were so impatient to visit the Heath, that, notwithstanding the fatigue of their journey, they would, I verily believe, have sat up all night, rather than run the hazard of over-sleeping themselves, and losing the morning-exercise. Mrs. Mildmay settled the point, however, to their entire satisfaction, by assuring them, that a servant should be put on duty, for the purpose of giving them timely notice of the sun's up-rising, before which it would be unnecessary to repair to the field.

THE morning came, when Mrs. Mildmay and myself made a part of the attendant cavalcade; and the ladies, to their unspeakable mortification, discovered, that to have figured away to advantage, they ought also to have been *à cheval*: but as they were wholly unprovided with hats and feathers in the Camp-stile, it was not in my benefactress's power to gratify their vanity, or horses would have been at their service.

LORD BRAZENS' corps was drawn forth. — Not Mars himself e'er looked so fierce as he! — A scream from the coach of "Brother! my "Lord!" burst like a volley on his ear. — He rolled his eyes around; — the beckoning hand of Miss Brazen directed his attention aright; and the salutes interchanged were such as I shall not give myself the trouble to describe: — they would fully my paper.

THE equestrian figures then caught his notice. He had heard of Mildmay-Hall, the beauty of its situation, the benevolence of its owner, but never till that happy moment could say he had *observed* the lady with whose fame he was so much enamoured.

"A RELATION"

"A RELATION!" he presumed, bowing to me.

"THE daughter of a friend—the worthiest man living, and a soldier!"

"HAD he the honour of knowing the gentleman?"

"MR. RIVERS!"

"YES, let me whisper it—(said Mrs. Mildmay, most agreeably) that I may not scandalize my Sovereign—Lieutenant Rivers."

HE covered a leer of impertinence with an obsequious bow, and invited us to refresh in his marquee.

TO his marquee we went, where the air of the pretty fellow made us quite forget the Soldier. Every thing was so fine and so finikin, so dainty and so studied, so bedecked and so befringed, that there was no end to the marvellings and the applaudings of the ladies; and we were obliged to sacrifice our truth on the altar of his vanity, and close in at every favourable pause with "Very pretty! very pretty indeed!"

BUT with all this *petit-maitreship* about him, he was no degenerate son of the Brazens. He ogled me with a confidence that startled me, and chattered away without fear or wit, though he had the honour of entertaining so amiable and accomplished a woman as Mrs. Mildmay; invited himself to the Hall, nothing doubting; and, as the *coup de grace* of his politeness, would escort us on horseback through the Lines, and present us, *en passant*, to his General.

WE're mounted.—He divided himself, as it were, between my proteſtress and me.—She was a lady of uncommon penetration, for she gave him credit for superabundant prowess; and "he doubted not the reproach of the Army would soon be

done away by Rivers's advancement.—He was not apt to boast, but he believed he had some little interest with the Higher Powers;—and the beauty of the daughter would prove a memento for the interest of the father.” — I bowed, I fear somewhat scornfully; but my heart spoke, and I could not be on my guard.

THE General was at his door, equipped like a General. Methought his brow would *well become* the laurel-wreath.—Lord Brazen advanced—announced the company.—His sister was graciously recognized—her friends politely saluted.—Mrs. Mildmay received a slight compliment, and I a cold movement of his hat:—but he had a lady waiting for him, to whom he was impatient to pay his devoirs—the queen of his wishes—the sovereign of his affections—the partner of his empire—the spirited female—the modern Eloise:

If there be yet another name more free,
More fond than Mistress, make me that to thee.

And we were soon convinced, that however he kept up the dignity of the Commander on every other occasion, he was an actual *charmer* in silken strings, to be led about, checked, &c. &c. at her high will.

LORD BRAZEN pointed me out to many of his acquaintance.—“I don't like this man's behaviour,” said Mrs. Mildmay: “he is a libertine in principle, and a ruffian in temper.—Heaven avert his malice! for if I have any skill, he has malicious designs against you now in his heart.”

“AM I not your child, replied I; and are you not both able and willing to protect me?”

“I GRANT it, and I will be more explicit on
“ that

“that point,” added she, “lest his narrow-mindedness should misread the nature of our connection.”—She was as good as her word.

“ELLA, my Lord, is not merely my companion, my friend, my god-child, but my adopted daughter; and so precarious is life, and uncertain human intentions, that whether I marry or die, I have put it out of my own power to do her injustice. I brought her up from her infancy, educated her with the nicest care, gave her claims to an ample provision, and it is my pride and glory, that I have proved myself, where those claims are the question, a woman of honour. She is too modest to tell a tale that is calculated to lift her even into due consequence; I am therefore happy your Lordship’s very particular enquiries into the origin and meaning of my attachment to her, has furnished me not only with a handsome, but a necessary opportunity of clearing up a point, which might be liable to misconception or misconstruction.”

LORD BRAZEN thanked her for the honour she had done him, with that silly disconcertion which marks the features of the bold and base, when detected or prevented in their unworthy schemes; and converted his familiarity into something like respect, when he afterwards addressed me.

“It has had its desired effect,” said she, wonderful woman; “and I have only to inform you, that you will find every word I uttered a sacred, an established truth; and you will oblige me (in conformity to the dirty notions of the world) by holding up your head accordingly.”

THIS, my dear madam, is no more than I expected ; but as neither my gratitude or my admiration is capable of addition, I shall leave you to make your own reflections—on the assurance she has given me that I am *amply* provided for.

WE returned to Mildmay-Hall to dinner, Lord Brazen accompanying us.

MILDMAY-HALL, my dear madam, has the magnificence of an Eastern palace, without the pageantry ; decorum takes the place of parade. The most sumptuous entertainment has there the air of a friendly repast ; — every servant knows and performs their duty : and the mistress's commands are no sooner received, than things dispose themselves in proper order, as it were mechanically ; or, perhaps, to give you a clearer idea, as if some good-natured Fairy, by the judicious exercise of her wand, produced silently and instantaneously every elegant arrangement.

LORD BRAZEN was struck dumb with surprise !—He thought he had seen the splendid and the immense ; — but Mildmay-Hall surpassed whatever his eye had beheld, and he no longer was at a loss to account for its universal fame.

MY apartment was shewn, amongst the rest ; nay, I suspect was ostentatiously shewn. It is next to Mrs. Mildmay's ; but far superior in the richness of its furniture, and the high finish of its architecture. It was the unworthy idea of charity she sought to chase from their imaginations ; — and during the whole day rebuked their most secret mistakes of that complexion, by the most affectionate attention to me on every occasion.

“ I LIVE but in her company,” said she ; —
 “ Mildmay-Hall would be a desert, if she was to
 “ forsake me. — She knows the way to every re-
 “ cess of my heart ; can soothe, delight, and re-

“ gulate

“gulate it, as she pleases. — When sick, she is
 “my physician ; — when sorrowful, the cordial
 “drop of my existence ; — and when in health,
 “she heightens my every enjoyment by her
 “friendly participation. — You must pardon me.
 “my dear Ella, for once speaking of you when
 “present, in the language I always use when
 “absent. — You know my sincerity, and what
 “obligations I have to you. — The dear child, la-
 “dies, has left father, and mother, sister, and
 “brother, for me ; nor shall she ever repent the
 “tenderness of her conduct.”

I COULD perceive the ladies would gladly have
 dispensed with this sauce to their venison ; — their
 souls, madam, had no relish for sentimental chat.
 — Another cause was, however, most politely
 called by the Lady of the feast, the moment she
 had fulfilled her desire of setting me in a proper
 light ; — and, except a glance of envy, which now
 and then escaped them ; — as, who should say, “ I
 “assure you, Madam is in fine quarters ! ” —
 “ Yes, yes, she knows how to choose and re-
 “fuse, it is plain ; — to prefer living in all the de-
 “licacies imaginable to following the Camp with
 “the poor Lieutenant her father ; ” — except, I
 repeat, these glances, the evening passed off to
 the general satisfaction.

THE ladies would have taken their leave in the
 morning ; but Mrs. Mildmay pressed them with
 so sweet a grace to favour her with their com-
 pany a second time to Camp, that they could not
 deny themselves the pleasure of attending her ;
 and, as I had my immediate *presentiment*, my fa-
 ther’s marquee is to be the place of our entertain-
 ment. — She is determined, my dear, to punish
 them with a sight of the whole family.

BUT, as the day's adventures will be poor indeed, if not entitled to a *special* letter, I shall conclude this with assuring you, that nothing is wanting to complete the happiness of the scene, but—what is impossible to be had—the felicity of a certain lady's presence, who shall be nameless for a variety of political and pious reasons, — far, far too tedious and too tender to mention. — Heigh-ho! — and thus in sober sadness I subscribe myself,

Your

ELLA RIVERS.

LETTER XII.

They mind no other thing—
But the Ladies and the King;
For every other care is slavery, oh!

YES, my dear madam, Mars and Venus are the only divinities a Soldier bows the knee to; and I have remarked it, in proportion to the valour of the man, is the warmth, the sincerity of the lover. Lord Brazen may counterfeit the character, but has no natural claims to it: he wants the grand essentials—liberality and sensibility.

I HOPE the merit of my little quotations is not lost upon you. I think to borrow an expression of Corporal Trim's, it makes a letter *look* better in the *face*. — The Scotch sonnet is an old one

from

from whence the lines which decorate this epistle are taken ; but it is not the less true or the less applicable ; and you may read it through, if it shall so please you, in your collection of ballads.

Though commissions are dear,
I will buy him one this year,
He shall serve no longer a Cadet, oh !

The wise, says the French proverb, understand half a word.

NEVER was such a contrast ! It had been Lord Brazen's pride to entertain us in all the frippery of foppery ;—it was Mrs. Mildmay's pride my father should receive us in all the *dignity* of plainness ;—and with so much judgment were the *cotes* selected, that Humility herself might have done the honours of the Lieutenant's marquee with exultation ;—for she would there have appeared in all her native loveliness—the beauties of good sense, and the ornaments of simplicity.

My Lord was all condescension. He shook my father by the hand, clapped my brother on the shoulder, kissed the ladies, and vowed that Rivers was the only fellow in the Camp that knew how to live.

MELVIN, on his return from exercise, dropped in upon us. He bowed carelessly, haughtily I thought, to Lord Brazen—complaisantly to the ladies—coloured up to the ears at every piece of right honourable gallantry paid me—and seemed to look, “ If you dare to form any pretensions there, I wear a sword.”—A foolish hot-headed boy ! Does he not know the difference between coquetting it, and the union of hearts ?

Mrs. MILD MAY told the ladies, that if it was most agreeable to dine their last day in Camp, she

believed she had interest enough with Mr. Rivers to get a hamper, waiting for such permission at the door of the marquee, admitted. The proposal was received with a general plaudit, except by Melvin. I bid him not be a fool, but treat me with indifference, for reasons I would give him at a more convenient time. I could just say so much to him, to bring him into order, whilst the bustle of opening the hamper, and setting forth the contents on my father's camp-table, engaged the attention of the company.—But he is a dreadful dissembler, and made very bungling work of his assumed character,

A LARGE ham, three couple of fowls, a sweetbread pye, and a pigeon ditto, with cheese, fruit, &c. &c. were the contents of the secretly-conveyed hamper, with a dozen bottles of excellent wine, *smuggled*, I may call it, into the marquee; for no leave was asked or granted for their introduction.—Lord Brazen swore a martial oath, which startled us women, that music was alone wanting to make it a feast worthy an emperor, and that deficiency he would take upon him to supply.—The portico was instantly filled with hautboys, clarinets, and kettle-drums.—I wished for the fife, but did not let the vulgar wish escape me;—and “God save the King,” “Rule Britannia,” and manifold other loyal songs transpierced the air :

Oh, 'twas a feast to hear, and see !

as Giles says of his mistress's tinkling the keys of her harpsichord; and we were the wonder and the envy of the whole army.

MELVIN must be conscious of some hidden imperfection, he has so mean an opinion of himself,—

self,—Lord Brazen pushed his stool in between Mrs. Mildmay and me, and very fairly left the other gentlemen to gallant the other ladies. — Captain Melvin's head ached (I suppose he intended I should fancy it was his heart) ; he could not eat—he could not sing—he could not say any thing to the purpose but watching his eyes, I at length frowned him into better manners, and better temper ;—and he vouchsafed to give us that little doleful ballad of Prior's,

In vain you tell your parting lover, &c.

and it being in unison with his *make-believe feelings*, he out-did himself. He is a little silly, I grant you ; but he is, my dear madam, a very amiable fellow in the main,

My father wished to have it understood that the music was a frolic of my Lord's.—A General Officer passed by :—" You are a happy man, " Mr. Rivers !"

" I HAVE the honour, Sir, of entertaining " Lord Brazen, and a party of ladies his relations, to whom, I am confident, your company would be highly acceptable."

LORD BRAZEN sat close : it was impossible to improve the present circle ; every new-comer, of whatever rank, would therefore be deemed by him an intruder. The General just stepped in (how powerful is curiosity !) drank a glass of Mrs. Mildmay's Champaign, as my father announced it, " at whose house (he added) Lord " Brazen's friends were then on a visit," and retired ; perceiving, I imagine, his presence was a restraint on our mirth, which broke out with redoubled violence, if noise is mirth's little check it had met with.

BUT how shall I tell you the conclusion? Lord Brazen, by his repeated toasts, which were circulated with great spirit, was so wound up, that he took my father aside, and in round plain terms offered himself for his son-in-law.

MY father was astonished!
 "I KNEW I should surprise you," said he;
 "but your daughter's beauty will atone my folly,
 "in the opinion of the world; and you must not
 "refuse me your sanction."

MY father paused.

"I AM, my Lord, one of those unfashionable parents who can resolve to *guide*, not *constrain* their children's inclinations. Ella has an humble, an unambitious heart, and may not, perhaps, be properly sensible of the honour you do her."

"THEN I have your consent," cried his Lordship exultingly, "if I can win the lady?— Pardon me the seeming vanity, my dear Sir; but I think I am too well acquainted with life and human nature to despair, unless I have a rival."

MY father solemnly engaged for me, that was not the case. — He wrung his hand in ecstasy: "Henceforth, then," cried he, "I am yours to command. You shall soon find I understand the sex. Only oblige me so far as to give the hint to your daughter now on the spot;—I mean the moment you can do it without being particular."

MELVIN'S fears pictured to him the business of this tête-à-tête, and the éclat with which my Lord returned to the company, convinced him he was not mistaken. I own I was not free from ebodings, and obeyed my father's
 with uncommon palpitations,
 from

from conceiving it would prove a critical audience.

He took me kindly by the hand, and seated me on his military trunk. "My child," said he, "it is necessary you should be informed what has passed between me and Lord Brazen. He judges of your mind from the giddy part of the sex he has been accustomed to converse with, and is positive you cannot refuse him. Mrs. Mildmay's lessons must have left me nothing to say on the subject. The goodness of her heart makes wealth appear desirable. She knows the true use, and the true value of it; but, though I wish you to determine for yourself on every offer you may meet with, I must beg you will declare in this nobleman's favour or disfavour:—if declare in his disfavour, you must do it tenderly, politely, cautiously. — I seldom, Ella, wish to temporize; but Lord Brazen is a haughty man of fashion, and will impatiently brook an affront from people of our stamp; and your poor brother has too much fire, to tolerate any man in insolence. This, I hope, will be a sufficient rule for your conduct.—Yet a regard for your ease, and my own honour, compels me to go deeper into the matter. I have assured him your affections are wholly uningaged. Your behaviour, my dear, warrants that assurance. Can I suppose you would deal so neglectfully by me, as to engage them without my knowledge?—But, should any false delicacy, or false fears, have sealed your lips on that subject, beware how a secret of the kind transpires!—It may be fatal to the (however worthy) possessor of that preference, in your favour, this proud soldier has stooped to sue for. — I trust my fame, your

“ your brother’s, your lover’s safety, if you
 “ have one, to your discretion. Make no reply,
 “ but compose yourself, and speedily rejoin your
 “ friends. — You may revolve what I have said
 “ to you at your leisure.”

Such Helen was, and who could blame the boy,

That in so bright a flame consum’d his Troy.

Here shall we have cutting of throats and pistol-
 ings on my account, unhappy beauty that I am !
 — But little does my dear father suspect, that
 Lord Brazen is apprised, from Mrs. Mildmay’s
 own mouth, of the fortune she intends bestowing
 upon me ; and that, instead of adoring my per-
 son, he is seeking only to set up his bauble of a
 title to sale ; or, in plain English, proclaiming,
 that if Mrs. Mildmay will make him master of
 her thousands, he will make me a Baroness. — I
 am therefore, in every sense of the word, his
 most obedient, most grateful, and most devoted
 humble servant. — What a paltry fellow it is !

I HAD a fan in my pocket, and, without know-
 ing what I did, took it out, and fanning myself
 for some moments, before I recollected my fa-
 ther’s injunction of following him as soon as pos-
 sible.

It is plain, Melvin’s fidgetings and prancings to
 oblige me, has not escaped his observation : how-
 ever, all is well so far, if I can but keep him within
 tolerable bounds. There is but one way, ma-
 dam ; and as we are allowed, in a true Christian
 spirit, of two evils to choose the least ; why, I
 must even promise my quarrelling, huffing swain,
 that if he will smooch his brow, and behave him-
 self handsomely, I will be his, and only his, when
 opportunity

opportunity *serves*, as the innocent country girls say, when they give their consent to be married.

WHEN I could trust myself to obey my father's orders, I came forth from the little lumber-tent, as it may properly be called; and the first object my eyes sought for was Melvin — the drooping, the desponding, the down-cast Melvin. — No such object, I assure you, was to be met with; for my retiring having made a sort of *derangement*, he contrived with much dexterity to shuffle himself next to Mrs. Mildmay, in whose ear he had been whispering certain things, with such encouragement, that his whole countenance was lighted up into smiles and dimples; — I protest I did not know the man. — In a word, my sweet girl, perceiving clearly what Brazen was about, he tampered with my benefactress on the instant, and obtained an appointment for the purpose; not *merely* of further explanation, but to receive me as a deed of gift at her hands, — on condition that he waited till she could settle things with my father, — though at the distance of twelve tedious months. — Accordingly we had him over, at Mildmay-Hall early next morning, when the ceremony of bestowing me was performed, in a serious, though uncannical manner; and now we live as happily, together or asunder, as the day is long.

It was a justifiable manœuvre, and has proved successful. He knew he had no chance with my father, so resolved to shoot flying with respect to my protectress; and means to set up her *previously*-granted approbation to my Lord's *insidiously* solicited interest with Mr. Rivers, who, in fact, had long before consigned his authority to that fair, gracious, and distinguishing lady.

LORD BRAZEN — for your Lords do as they please all the world over — attended us to the extremity

fremity of the Heath, roaring catches and glees; when we separated, and, with our servants armed with blunderbusses, made all possible haste to the Hall.

THE ladies professed themselves infinitely obliged by the entertainment they had received, and invited and re-invited us to their houses in London; — “not forgetting the Cadet,” said Miss Brazen, whom, it seems, she had beheld with very favourable, not to say admiring eyes. — A Lord’s sister, madam! — It is enough to turn his little head! — They departed — never more, I hope, to trouble us with their company.

YOU see, let who will meet, or who will bid adieu, the whole business of life is love. — Love at cross-purposes is, however, a dangerous game. — Heaven fend I may play my way well through, that I may never be reduced to the sad necessity of subscribing myself

Your sorrowful

ELLA RIVERS!

LET

LETTER XIII.

WE have had terrible confusion!—Lord Brazen, to prove his great regard for our family, solicited and obtained a Pair of Colours for Ferdinand, in a regiment, my dear madam, he well knew would be ordered abroad at the breaking-up of the campaign.

I WAS seized with a trembling fit—Ferdinand's face was flushed into a deep scarlet—Mrs. Mildmay entered her protest against his acceptance of it—and Lydia burst into tears.—My father begged leave to speak a few words to my Lord in private, and they retired into the lumber-tent together.

MELVIN was at the door of the marquee, receiving the parole from his serjeant.—He now joined us. Mrs. Mildmay declared she would never forgive my father, if he consented to sacrifice his son before his time—that was her expression. “If you are both obliged to go,” said she, “your friends must submit; but I know this busy Lord is laying a trap for the life of a man, who, who, his conscious demerit tells him, must despise him; and though, in general instances, I am no abettor of disobedience, I will on this ground spend half my fortune to support Ferdinand in an opposition that is but another name for self-preservation.”

MELVIN embraced his Ferdinand, as he called him, with the most cordial affection:—“We are brothers,” said he, “and ought to have one common interest: you shall, therefore, either stay at home and share my purse, or I will go abroad, and share your dangers.—My Ella would condemn me, if I could think of happiness,

"happiness, whilst her heart, and the hearts of all those she loves, were tortured on your account."

"You are a noble fellow," cried Mrs. Mildmay, "and richly deserve my girl, good as she is."—I reached out my hand, not considering the impropriety, and let him kiss it five several times in the face of the whole company—once for me, once for Mrs. Mildmay, once for Lydia, and twice for your fair self;—and he was prouder of that honour, than he would have been in obtaining a truncheon.—But you ought not to laugh at him, as you know what it is to love.

My father and Lord Brazen joined us; the former looking a little embarrassed, the latter not at all piqued. He played with Mrs. Mildmay's glove, hummed a tune, told me I was handsomer than an angel, invited himself to dine at the Hall the next day, and bowing affectedly, wished us a good morning.

MRS. MILDMAI, I could perceive, expected my father to communicate. My father had no such intention.—I was sorry for it: he is the closest man alive, where intelligence would pain you; the total reverse, where it will give pleasure.

"I THINK my Lord Brazen very presuming," said Mrs. Mildmay. — "Sure, you have friends of longer standing than he?"

"He is a Lord," said I.

My father smiled.

"MY sex," rejoined Mrs. Mildmay, are a proverb for curiosity; — will you then excuse me, if I confess an impertinent desire to know what has passed between you and that great busy-body?"

"W"

"We have been disputing, madam," said my father, "on the etiquette of conferring and receiving favours;—I insisting upon it, the malicious world will say, he bought my daughter's affections by providing for her relations before-hand; and he affirming, that when once matrimony is *en train*, there can be no impropriety in a man's displaying his friendship, how, or in whatever he pleases."

"A vast act of friendship," said Mrs. Mildmay, "to want you to *transport* your son for a Pair of Colours; I would undertake to procure him much more than that in England, if it was not from the fear of wounding your independent spirit."

"Oh I," said Melvin.

My father looked grave.

"My dear Sir," added he, "you cannot charge me with even an *attempt* to affront you yet. I have been proud, and ever shall, to subscribe and feel myself the obliged party."

"Alas! my father," said the gentle Lydia,—"spare yourself and us as much as possible. If we must be unhappy, let us suffer together. We are now collected, as it were, under your wing. You bend Ferdinand's mind at your will:—not the osier is more obedient."

My father was hurt.

"If I am tenacious of his honour rather than his happiness, it is because I know his happiness is alone dependent on his honour."

"Say, Ferdinand, by your tenderest hopes, did you ever wish they should experience a separation?"

LYDIA wept.

"I did not mean," resumed my father, "to strike hard on your too quick sensibility: but, my

" my love, I have nothing to preserve, but the
 " honour of my children:—I had nothing else to
 " bestow upon them. It is a precious gift, and
 " must be diligently watched over. An error,
 " an accident loses it for ever. Thus far, I flatter
 " myself, I have advanced in life unwounded
 " in that sacred, that vital part; but I am unfortunately
 " drawn into a situation, that none but
 " myself can save me harmless in, or extricate
 " me from.—When the lucky moment arrives—
 " I beg Mrs. Mildmay's pardon for this seeming
 " rebuke of her friendly interference; but I
 " trust she will believe me, when I declare, I
 " hope the time is not far distant, when I shall
 " be able to give her such an *eclaircissement* as
 " will incline her to approve the conduct she may
 " now condemn; especially when I tell her, by
 " the way, she can take no resolution for the
 " advantage or felicity of my children, I shall be
 " dissatisfied with, provided she acts in *defiance*
 " of, not in concert with, me: for I have bound
 " myself," added he, smiling, to enter into none
 " of her cabals."

THIS set us all at ease with ourselves and each
 other, nay, my dear benefactress tossed up her
 head with unusual dignity; as who should say, " I
 " have now full power to do all the good I
 " please."

WOULD to Heaven she was my father's wife,
 as well as my mother, by every liberal, every affectionate tie!

LORD BRAZEN, I thank him, is at the bottom
 of all this. It is to him we are indebted for
 henceforth doing what is right in our own eyes:
 nay, it is in contemplation, to *seem* to have a
 family-war on his account; or, more properly, a
 friendly one, as Mrs. Mildmay and my father

will be the opposing parties ; and being told Brazen was to come to tea, it was settled we should begin to lay the foundation of our countermine.

My father acted so far in concert with us, though unintentionally, that he shut himself up in the lumber-tent ; and Mrs. Mildmay observed, " he was much changed of late, he was not the same man, nor could she think what was come to him."

BRAZEN has an admirable swallow, when the dose is seasoned to his taste ; so down it went. Melvin fat and pick'd his fingers : my brother bet the devil's tat-too ; whilst Mrs. Mildmay, my Lord and I, were all gaiety and conviviality.

THE evening-gun was fired ; Mrs. Mildmay called for her coach, left her compliments for Mr. Rivers, regretted the loss of so agreeable a companion as Brazen, and we talked over the whole of my father's behaviour in our way to the Hall.

MRS. MILDMAÿ, to secure our happiness, was for making short work of it, and marrying Melvin and me directly : that was the literal construction, she said, of my father's words. But I am obliged to her : I do not choose to vow to love, honour, and obey, one man, whilst I can be adored by twenty ; and, becoming a wife, make it my duty to be demure, constant, and the Lord knows what.—No, no ; it is time enough to run my neck into the matrimonial noose at the end of the campaign.

LYDIA is very busy writing — I conjecture to you — a full and true account, I suppose, of the transactions you are already acquainted with : she will, however, dip her pen in less lively colourings ; and consequently, will present you new prospect of them in shades. — I can but a few touches of the pathetic ma-

fully thrown in, though I must doubt of being excelled. My style of writing is calculated to rouse, not stupify the feelings; and as I would prefer a living to a dead companion, so I would a merry to a dismal correspondent. — You have my leave, however, to make your preference; but keep it to yourself, if you are wise:—for positively, if I find my talents or my complaisance *under-rated*, I will renounce my pen and ink for ever. Adieu, then, description! — Adieu the tender passion!—Lydia has no genius for the one, and is too powerfully enchained by the other, to venture to mention it.—You will seldom find leisure, ability, and inclination, united in the same person; though it happens to be the precise case with

Your, &c.

ELLA RIVERS.

L. F. T.

LY
which
made
him,
a few
&c. b
perty
and h
fected
hired
the C
under
was br
fightin
indigna
that hi
fixed a
stratag
sal, by
ence r
had fel
they co
an opp
without
ther wa
defence
him in
Wilson

L E T T E R X I V .

A dawn of hope my soul revives,
And banishes despair;
If yet my dearest Damon lives,
Ye Gods, make him your care!

LYDIA has received letters from America, which inform her, " That Wilson the father made his escape from the ruffians who had seized him, and intended to sell him to the Cannibals, in a few hours after they had torn him from his house, &c. but that believing his son dead, and his property on that part of the county gone from him and his heirs, until at least a peace could be effected between the Colonists and the English, he hired a guide, and threw himself into the arms of the Congress, and now holds a considerable place under the Americans. That at length the news was brought him, his son not only lived, but was fighting against the cause he had espoused. His indignation was excited; and taking it for granted, that his political principals must by that time be fixed and immoveable, he resolved to work by stratagem, rather than run the hazard of a refusal, by asking him to come to him, or having violence repelled by violence. That accordingly he had fellows for many days on the scout, before they could accomplish their undertaking; — until an opportunity offering, they threw themselves without noise between the litter in which my father was and him, and, as he was unprepared for defence, soon made him their prisoner, and bore him in triumph to their employer. — That young Wilson spurned at every offer made him by the Congress,

Congress, calling its members the abettors of rebellion, with many provoking, &c. &c.—which, as he wished, got him into close custody, and sheltered him for a time from his father's schemes.—That his father had had sufficient interest, however, with his friends to procure his enlargement, and placed him under his immediate eye, apprehending he meant to elope; though, poor fellow! where could he go! He had no money, and was liable to be taken up and questioned, which ever way he advanced: but that having lost all patience at the treatment he received, he became so desperate at last, as to fly.”—and there the thread of this damsel's intelligence is lost.

It was, however, enough.—He lived! — The same Providence that had been, could still be his protector.—She was quite, quite happy.

SHE recollected the whole scene of their first meeting;—how lovely he looked even in death! but that

When he opened the day-break of his beauteous eyes.

HEAVEN and Earth!—what expressions were capable of painting her surprize, her wonder, or her love!

In a few hours she began to droop the head.—Poor fellow! what must his sufferings have been,—and she, alas! the fatal cause.—It was to rejoin her he had quitted the roof of prosperity.—She saw him fainting with fatigue, with hunger. He was now sliced in pieces by the Indians; now thrown into a loathsome dungeon by his countrymen.—Ah! he was dead!—and had died unknowing how much she loved.

It was not, it seems, to write to you, it was to read this precious packet her fair friend had transmitted

transmitted her, that she retired so secretly into the lumber-tent : but she now found out it was reviving all her sorrows, without affording her the smallest consolation to send her so broken, so imperfect an account ; — it was a piece of cruel kindness ; — and thus did her weak imagination convert what she had considered in the morning as a blessing, by noon into a severe calamity.

AFTER tea she changed again. There was infinite satisfaction in finding he had not lost his life by his affectionate attendance on her father. — He had survived whole months, even the hard usage of being dragged away, of being separated from her he loved. — It would not be a greater miracle, in her estimation, for him to survive all his misfortunes.

IN the evening, this infinite satisfaction was reduced to no satisfaction at all ; nay, it was rather a double aggravation of her misery. — She was now in England, far, far beyond his utmost reach ; could prove no assistance to him ; could not so much as extend her hand with the necessary support to keep him from expiring by famine — by his wounds. — A flood of tears somewhat relieved her, and she resolved, in pity to both me and herself, to forbear touching upon so painful, so melancholy a subject. — I grieve to see her the prey of generous and unavailing grief ; and you, I know, will give her a sigh.

BUT you must also give me a hearty congratulation. — Lord Brazen is gone from the Heath. — A Majority was offered him in one of the regiments encamped on Warley Common, and he did not think it prudent to slight his good fortune : he therefore promised my father to claim his interposition so soon as they went into winter-quarters, and

and bid us all adieu *en militaire* — to lose the remembrance of us in new scenes.

FINDING ourselves at ease, Melvin introduced a country-girl to me, whom her mistress had sent between two panniers of fruit to the Camp, and who had lost her way, and with great simplicity besought him to direct her to the tent she mentioned.

THE poor pretty creature was so unfit for the place her inconsiderate mistress had sent her to, that she entered at the first word, though she did not know who might be within, or whether there was any one besides the Captain, who was so fair-spoken, she said, she could trust herself with him *ony wheres*. It is astonishing to me that fear does not operate on these simple, well-meaning, but ununiformed minds, in the same manner that discretion or delicacy would on yours or mine.

MELVIN purchased her whole cargo of fruit for seven-and-sixpence, and I began to question her, how it came to pass that she should be sent on such an errand.

“AN’ please you, madam,” said she, I am a
 “a poor fatherless and motherless girl, and have
 “nothing else to depend upon but doing as I am
 “bidden for a livelihood. I lived with an honest
 “old Dame till last week, who had me from a
 “child, as one may say, and then thought myself
 “well off to fall into the bread I ha’ done I didna’
 “like, to be sure, in one sense to come to Camp,
 “though I longed deadly much to see it in ano-
 “ther; and so, as all hands were aloft in the
 “field at harvest-work, my Dame bid me take
 “the old mare and bring the fruit; and I
 “wou’dna’ say her nay. I never harmed no-one,
 “thought I, and what good will it do any one to
 “harm me?” (Melvin put his handkerchief to

his

“

“

“

Far

this,

so p

a de

that

tions

ed up

“

“yo

“

“

“

“

“

“wa

“ho

“po

“I

SH

casting

one.

“A

“low

“H

had be

his mot

he had

on the

SHE

—“M

fallen h

though

men.”

VOL.

his mouth, and pretended to cough) "and so I shall go clear home again, without *axing* either this or that, now I had been so lucky to sell my fruit."

THIS, my dear madam, is a mere rose-bud to Farquhar's country-girl.—She was all pertness: this, all innocence. It wrung my heart to see her in so perilous a situation. Her dress was homely to a degree; but it was, nevertheless, discoverable that she was one of Nature's most finished productions:—her complexion, her eyes, her teeth—I gazed upon her with wonder, pity, and admiration.

"My dear child," said I, "you know not your danger."

"ANON!" cried this daughter of simplicity.

"FLY the Camp, as you would a precipice!"

"—Have you never heard of bad men?"

"FALSE-HEARTED lovers—she said—there was many and many a one in her neighbourhood; and it would melt one to hear how the poor girls bemoaned themselves."

"HAD you never a sweet-heart?" said I.

SHE blushed, and looked at Melvin;—then casting her eyes down,—“Never,” she said, but one.

"AND is he," demanded I, "an honest fellow?"

"HONEST as day, but he was poor. They had been about to put up the banns twice; but his mother each time fell sick; and so the money he had saved to pay the Parson, had been spent on the doctors."

SHE then got up, and wished herself at home;—"Mayhap Robin would think some ill had befallen her, as he did not love the *soldier men*; though in her mind, they were very proper, civil men."

"Does Robin know you are come to the Camp?"

"Oh no; she durst not tell him; for he would have lost a whole day's work to have *comed* with her; and she would be off directly, for fear he should be uneasy at her stay."

"Well, my good girl," said I, "fear nothing.—I have a friend, the best woman in the world.—But perhaps you have heard of Mrs. Mildmay?"

"Or she must have heard of nothing. Why, the very babes could lisp out madam Mildmay's name; for all their fathers and mothers, in turn had been indebted to her for bread."

"Well, Mrs. Mildmay is the lady that shall carry you home safe from a spot the most unfit, of all others, for so young and so well-dressed a girl, to be cast upon;" so I bid her once more sit down, and rest contented.

My sister talks of Savages, and the cruel outrages they commit on the peaceful inhabitants in America: but let me coolly ask you, my dear madam, what savage natures those men must possess, who could betray to sin and sorrow so amiable, so unsuspecting, so defenceless a creature as Peggy Winought? the name of this *fortunate* fugitive. Gracious Providence! Had she not come directly in front of my father's marquee;—had she not happened to arrive just at the lucky moment when the officers are dressing, and the soldiers cleaning their arms;—had she enquired either to the right or left;—or, in a word, of any other man than Melvin or Ferdinand (for I do believe they are incapable of violating the laws of humanity, however licentious they might prove in licentious scenes);—she must have fallen a sacrifice to the folly or the wickedness of the woman

man who could expose so fair a blossom to the rough blightings of vice. — But thrice happy was the minute of her introduction to me, and I will never leave or forsake her, until she is Robin's wife.

MRS. MILD MAY did not call for me till it was so late, that I trembled for poor Robin's repose. But when we arrived at a little farm house, at the top of the village where he lived, we found her mistress had been too artful to publish her indiscretion: but had amused the young man with a false account of the place she had sent her to. Robin was, however, there at our arrival, waiting the return of his mistress; and judge, if you can, his surprize, when he saw her descend from Mrs. Mildmay's coach, accompanied by Madam herself; and, to complete the matter, we followed her into the house.

THE wretch, I thought, looked conscious; for she began to make some lame apologies for sending Peg to the Camp; as that, "when it came to the upshot, that either Peg or her must go, she was tempted to save her old bones, and lay the burthen upon young shoulders."

MRS. MILD MAY, however, gave her a lesson, which I fancy she will not forget in a hurry. Then asking the young fellow how he hoped to maintain a wife; he answered, "That they must live as other poor *volks* don; but for the matter of that, he would be bold to say, where there was love, there was every thing."

"WHAT if you was destitute," said Mrs. Mildmay, "of bread? — Why, " man, there "is no existing without bread."

"AYE, and bread he would get, he'd be bound for it: — he was not afraid of laying his
E 2
shoulder

shoulder to the plough ; and Providence was all sufficient."

FINDING it to no purpose to talk reason to a young fellow, whose love made him hope for miraculous support, she cut the matter short, and came to business.

"It is pity," said she, "you should not be encouraged in your industry. If the young woman is willing, she shall go home with me till she is married. I will speak to my steward to take you into constant employment in whatever you are most fit for ; and when Peggy is your wife, she shall rear pigs for me, geese, and perhaps have a cow under her care. — I have many such nurseries, for the benefit of my poor neighbours ; nor shall she fail of her share in the distribution, if I find her kind to the animals, and faithful to her trust. — We ought, at least, to make the lives of the poor creatures happy, that are to die for our food."

ROBIN could hear no more : — he snatched his Peggy's hand, and down they dropped on their knees—in mute eloquence.—Their gratitude, my dear madam, was too big for utterance.

I COULD not help lamenting to Mrs. Mildmay, that there was no other way of making such a beautiful girl happy, than by giving her to such a clown : — but she assured me, she could discover, under all the disadvantages of hard labour, anxiety, and coarse apparel, that nature had been nearly as liberal to him as to her. — "Their hearts, moreover," said she, "are united ; and "foul befall the man or woman that could attempt to rend them asunder !"

PEGGY's eyes swam in pleasure all the way to Mildmay-Hall ; and, as piety is the offspring of uncorrupted nature, gave praise to Heaven for

the wonders it had wrought in her favour : concluding with telling us, that Robin had surely died, if he had never seen her more.

MRS. MILD MAY, my dear Mrs. Mildmay, shall I ever look on your like ?—Not I fear, on this side mortality.

So leaving Peggy and Robin to the contemplation of their happy prospects, and my benefactress to the conscious delight of well-doing and well-meriting, I will bring my letter to a conclusion ;

And only beg you to believe,

That I am, &c.

ELLA RIVERS

LETTER XV.

I AM not worthy your friendship, your good opinion.—Ferdinand, too, must renounce me ; for, Ella, I have discovered that mine is an illiberal, an envious heart ;—and that, instead of tender regret, I am angry with Providence, that you are not either detained on the barren spot with myself, or that I am not permitted to ramble all the world over with you.—I despise myself, and have no hope but, sooner or later, to be despised by you.

Do not trouble yourself, my good girl, to write me pictures of your happiness ;—to tell me that Ferdinand has the good sense, the piety, to

submit unrepining to the necessities of his situation ;—that he still loves me.—I merit not his love ; for ; instead of rejoicing in his joy, I weep that he is not as miserable as myself ;—yet, contradiction as I am, should die if I heard he was unhappy.

BUT my situation, Ella, is a melancholy one.—My harpsichord has lost its fine tone ; nay, is discord to my ear.—Ferdinand is no more the object I exert my little talents to entertain.—Your sister, too—her sorrows will have an end. The prospect brightens on every eye but mine.—I wake without a hope beyond dragging thro' the day ! and pass whole sleepless hours, when all besides me are at rest.—My father sees me the prey of discontent, but sees it unpitying. When Ferdinand was here, did I droop the head ? Had I a taste for solitude ? This, this is to be rich !—How wise was that woman, who, to rebuke her husband's avarice, covered his table in a moment of hunger with gold.—Gold cannot purchase content : it cannot purchase friends : it cannot silence the whisperings of an evil conscience : it cannot buy health, or prolong our days : but it can embitter the enjoyment of them.—Heaven, in its wrath, as some Poet tells us, surely revealed the shining mischief.—It is the box of Pandora ; nay worse ; for hope was retained in that.—Gold has no hope for the wretched, but the hope of Tantalus. It promises what it never can perform, and tortures us with unavailing expectation.

I KNOW not what I write !—Ferdinand has obeyed the command of a stern father. I know he commanded him leave me ; but if he has extorted ever so solemn a promise from him not to write to me, he has not locked him up from the use of pen and ink.—The inclination, not the power,

"power, is wanting, or he would have said,
 "I am forbid to correspond with you;—place
 "my silence, therefore, to a just account.—My
 "heart is with you, though my person is con-
 "fined to this distant spot.—Live for me, as I
 "will for you." No, no; not a word.—But I
 am satisfied; yes, you may guess how I am satis-
 fied, by my complaining.

LYDIA!—her filial piety ran away with her.
 —A fine excuse for broken friendship!—And as
 for you—you must not be separated from your
 dear Mrs. Mildmay.—I am chagrined, mortified,
 unhappy; and was I to fill whole sheets of paper,
 it would be all to the same doleful tune.—Think
 not so hardly of me, however, I conjure you, as
 I do of myself. My reason knows every thing is
 right, though my petulance pronounces every
 thing wrong. I long to see you, converse with
 you—Lydia or your brother—any one of you.—
 all of you.—Is this folly, frenzy?—If so, I fear
 it is what will stick by me, mark my character,
 and govern my pen to the end of my life.

I am.

With the tenderest remembrances,

Your, &c.

C. FLETCHER.

LETTER XVI.

Ah, cruel Heaven! that made no cure for love.

YOU are troubled with the spleen, my dear girl;—a lady like disease; but I would advise you to shake it off.—You fancy yourself an unamiable object:—your next whim will be to fancy yourself an inanimate one—

I'd humour you, if you was sick;
But not when you are splenetic.

That would be to feed your distemper, and become accessory to the suspension of your fine understanding. Besides you should recollect Ferdinand left you, and he flatters himself he shall find you, a beautiful young damsel. Will you then let *fretful* be wrote in your forehead—court a premature old age—tinge every object in the fair Creation with the gloom of your own mind—and, instead of eyes that sparkle intelligence, and which he was wont to adore, present them to his view dimmed by tears, or jaundiced by suspicion?—Fye! fye on't!

Oh be but yourself, and his homage he'll pay,
And your empire is solid and sure.

WH^Y, madam, we must bend with the occasion, if we would rise superior to misfortune; and work out our happiness, as we are commanded to work out our salvation, with fear and trembling.

I COMMITTED your letter, the instant I read it, to the flames:—there was no trusting to the possibility

possibility of keeping it to one's self. Had Ferdinand seen it, we had been all undone. Be thankful, then, it has fallen into prudent hands; and when the fit returns, do any thing that's lawful—but *write*. Every word bears contagion with it. Even I am not proof against its force; and have been questioned three several times, on falling into reveries, what can be the cause. I impute it to the Artillery, which have been firing their rounds to-day—to the heat—to every thing—but the spleen of my friend, communicated to me by her pen. Read this, and spare me—Lydia—Ferdinand—all your friends, in future; for I will keep no more of your pernicious secrets.

BUT you always write much in the same strain; from whence I pick out this mortification for my vanity, viz. that you never sit down to write to me, but when you are in the dumps, or you don't know *how*ish; or are over-run; as in the last instance of your kindness, with the vapours.

I WISH you was within hearing of the noise by which I am now nearly stunned. Your heart bounds at the idea! Your heart is, then, a foolish, fluttering thing, and does not know when it is well.—Lydia is in Camp;—Lydia is surrounded by beaux;—Lydia is within the sound of every kind of martial music that can rouse the soul, or enchant the ear;—yet Lydia weeps, laments, sighs; and though she brings abroad a tolerable face of contentment, it the veriest croaker in existence:

For not of themselves the gay beauties can please;:
We only can taste when the heart is at ease.

My father, since Lord Brazen's departure, has unbosomed himself. His Lordship suspected Mel-

vin was the favourite, and pointed him out for such. Mr. Rivers knew of no such thing, and therefore disavowed it ;—but the world, he tells us, is a malicious world, and he is well aware would impute an event of that kind to artifice and finesse ;—a concerted scheme between a needy man and a handsome girl, however the result of chance or destiny,—the vulgar epithet for whatever is unaccountable. To have refused a Lord, who condescended to honour him so far as to solicit his alliance, would have been to draw the whole Nobility on his back, to punish his boldness and poverty of spirit ;—besides involving a deserving young fellow (Melvin, my dear) and a beloved son in a quarrel ; a thirsting for blood, which he thought unjustifiable, and incompatible with humanity.—To stand on our defence, either against an open or a private enemy, was, he conceived, a duty we owed our God, our King, and ourselves ; but a sanguinary temper was as hateful as it was diabolical.

To obviate all these alarming probabilities, and save the Camp from confusion, he had resolved on a conduct he seldom stooped to, and was ill qualified to support, though it was, in fact, nothing more than *honest dissimulation*,—and as a proof of the uprightness of that conduct, it had preserved peace and good harmony, at the same time that it had neither injured nor deceived any man; and he hoped and trusted Lord Brazen, from his removal, would be led to form new connexions, and forget the poor Lieutenant's daughter; to which we all audibly joined our——So be it!

MRS. MILD MAY, imagining this to be the good time, ventured to hint pretty plainly at Mel-

Corde

vin's favourable sentiments of Miss Ella. My father replied, "It was the too common consequence of young people's being much together to surprise him; but if we meant he should believe his consent necessary to our happiness, we must not precipitate events, but leave them to their natural, their *rational* course. There was one avenue not absolutely blocked up—an avenue of prosperity for his children.—It pained him most sensibly to give pain, and austerity was the very reverse of his character, unless when austerity was virtue. We were all young enough to wait a turn in our affairs, and not, by yielding to the dictates of a romantic imagination, wound a fond father in the tenderest part—his honour; and furnish bad men with a pretext for calumniating."

It was universally agreed and confessed, that he had a right to dispose of us; and that he had now offered glorious terms, which, on our duty, our respect, our gratitude, should be our rule of conduct."

I NEVER heard him say so much in my life.—Poverty, a submission to the hard lines of poverty, has heretofore been his perpetual theme;—to feed on hard meats, rather than let go our integrity;—and welcome every evil, provided dishonour was not in the catalogue.—Now he bids us wait;—one avenue of prosperity is not *absolutely* shut against us. Would to Heaven he had condescended to be a little more explicit!—Prosperity to his family was the word——

——Winds catch the sound!

Cordelia is a Queen!

FERDINAND;

FERDINAND, your Ferdinand, has a *chance* to be lifted out of his present obscurity—to have property—to solicit your hand!

Oh for a Music of fire!

then would I paint the change of scene in proper colourings.—Here is a specific for your Ladyship's spleen—vapours—every mental disease!—What have you more to ask?—There is one possible avenue to a re-union with your lover, your friends, on terms of that equality your heart has long given them; when the bright polish, as my father most justly calls it, of his fame shall be restored, and Sir Ferdinand bid adieu to every unfriendly, every unfavourable opinion; when his affection for his godson shall revive in its fullest force; when he shall recollect his infant endearments, his undissembled regard for him; and taking the violence he has done his inclination into the account, in order to be uniformly faithful to the *implied* trust reposed in him, he will exult in his son-in-law, and we shall all be happy.

I HUNG about my benefactress's neck when my father left us—Melvin cut capers across the marquise—Ferdinand kissed off a falling tear from Lydia's cheek—Lydia, the only one, who must still despair—But there is, my dear madam, no such thing as perfect bliss on earth: let us not, then, prepare disappointments for ourselves, by expecting impossibilities at the hands of Providence; I mean impossible in the chain of human affairs, in the œconomy of human existence; for, as Pope tells us,

Man never is, but always to be blest'd;

and we must be content to drink of the mingled cup.—Lydia, however, rejoices in the joy of her friends; and *go thou and do likewise.*

I am, &c.

ELLA RIVERS.

LETTER XVII.

In folly's cup still laughs the bubble joy;
One prospect lost, another still we gain,
And not a Vanity is given in vain.

REVELLING on revelling!—Now, my dear madam, now am I going to give cause for a new fit of the vapours, the spleen, &c. &c. but not from the ignoble motives you imagine.—It is not our joy that excites your envy, as you call it, but your non-participation of it that awakens your grief. Your too faithful and too busy memory connects the past with the present—a long, long line of bitter disappointments and cross incidents. Lest one single grievance should not sufficiently touch your heart, you weep over all you have experienced, and thereby cherish cruel remembrances, the traces of which would otherwise wear out in your mind; and you would, if not a happy, be a contented being.—And so much by way of digression.

MELVIN

MELVIN came to Mildmay-Hall yesterday morning with Ferdinand in his hand.—I could not divine what was in the wind: an East-Indiaman just arrived at Chatham had a very particular friend of his on board, and nothing would satisfy the gentleman but we must do his friend the honour to dine with him.—It would be high entertainment he was certain to Miss Rivers, who had frequently told him she had never seen any larger vessel than a Bristol trader.

I ASKED for Lydia.—She chose to stay with her father.—Poor, poor Lydia!—Mrs. Mildmay bid me dress, and kindly said she liked the scheme excessively.

FERDINAND being my brother, could not, you know, gallant me; so I fell to Melvin's lot; and the handsome widow had her handsome fellow as well as I, had she not, madam?—for *Ferdinand* was he.

WE soon arrived; for I pass over all the smart things I said on the way, not caring to play the egotist—and on my honour I was the *wit* of the company;—so that not being disposed to write dull things, I omit the mention of whatever fell from the lips of my companions, including even my benefactress. In my absence she may shine; but, pardon me, the brightest star loses its lustre when placed too near the *sun*.

WHAT an immense fabric is an East-India ship!—That drawing one up the side in a chair is whimsical; and I was obliged to shut my eyes, or I should have betrayed my cowardice: but when once safe on board, I was a heroine.

THE Captain received us with great politeness. He is a man of breeding, of understanding, of learning—(I thought a sailor stuck to navigation); but, take my word for it, he is not a man

of taste.—Mrs. Mildway had all his devoirs, in-
 somuch that if Melyin had not been of the party,
 I should not have had a *civil*, I do not mean a com-
 plaisant thing said to me all the day; and I shall
 always love him for keeping me so opportunely in
 charity with myself.

THE origin of ship-building was the Ark. In-
 deed, I wonder not so astonishing an invention
 should not be human. Uninstructed by the Di-
 vinity, my dear, who could have thought of sail-
 ing on the bosom of the deep?—I could be very
 moral, and very great on this subject; but I check
 myself, and return to the business of the day.

THE state-room contained many curiosities in
 the painted glass, Chinese wood, and China wares;
 and we were presented with a regale of sweetmeats,
 and some of the finest wines I ever drank.

WE visited the store-rooms.—What a mine of
 treasures they are! I can now account for the dis-
 tress and the exultation of those that lose, and
 those that win such a prize at a period of national
 hostility.

THE Captain paraded it from place to place, for
 his sweet widow's amusement; and, on opening
 one little closet or cabin, I was struck in the most
 extraordinary manner by the pensive attitude, and
 elegant, though apparently neglected figure of a
 young man, who suddenly withdrew, as not choos-
 ing to be an object of contemplation.

"WHAT office," said I, (as the inquisitive
 visitor) "may that young fellow hold under you,
 Captain?"

"HE is a passenger, madam.

"FROM the Indies?" rejoined I."

"THE same, madam."

"HE looks unhappy.—Did you observe him,
 Mrs. Mildmay?"

"HE

“HE is a *lover* perhaps!” said Melvin.

“CRUELLY *separated* from the woman of his heart!” said Ferdinand.

“I *PITY* him sincerely,” said Mrs. Mildmay, “let his misfortunes be what they may.—The traces of sorrow are strong in his face—a soft, a silent sorrow;—and I always lament forms do not admit me, on such occasions, to enquire if I *could* be serviceable.”

“THAT is so like you!” cried my brother; “but I should think such benevolence as yours might sanctify every deed.”

HERE the conversation ended; for the noble Captain had taken the opportunity to slip away; and now rejoining us, conducted us to the balcony, where it was agreed we should pass the intervening time to the dinner hour.

“I HAVE,” said the Captain as we took our seats, “been making interest with that young passenger to give us his company; but he positively declines dining with us,—and I was glad to compound the matter by my acceptance of his promise to join us at tea.”

WE thanked him in very high terms for his polite attention to our little whims.—He replied “the whims (as I was pleased to call them) of generous minds ought to be respected, and he had only done his duty.”

I LOOKED full at him, and, upon my word, the mist being cleared before my eyes, I found him a very pretty fellow.—You must know, this was the first compliment in which I had been included.

WE dined; and if I was at a loss for subject-matter, what a field would that *daily* act of our lives furnish me with!—The number and elegance of the dishes—their arrangement—the loyal healths—choice of wines—super-excellent de-

sert-

fert—the delicacies — the perfumes of the East—
But I am reduced to no such extremities, and
therefore shall hasten into the balcony, to inhale
the soft western breezes which are now fanning
that quarter of the ship, drink my coffee, and
impatiently expect the stranger's visit.

GRACIOUS, as gentle stranger, he is here! —
Neatness improves his figure beyond all imagination.—Melvin—who would not love the fellow?
has seated him by me; and I will so kindly chat
to him, that all his cares shall at least be suspended,
if gratitude does not unlock his heart.

BUT I should tell you, the Captain was obliged
to practise a little finesse to get him amongst us.
—“His relations—only his relations! — Would
“he not mix with the relations of a man he pro-
“fessed to esteem?” — We therefore *Madam'd*
and *Sir'd* each other, or exchang'd the plain Yes
and No during the whole remainder of the time
we staid on board.

I WAS in great hopes we should have come to
the knowledge of who he was, and whence he
came; for, as Yorick says, I wanted the traces,
from his seeming worthiness, through which my
good wishes might reach him, if I never saw him
more: but he was so folded up in reserve, where
his own history was the question, that we parted,
all unknowing of each other, as we had met, ex-
cept the acquaintance of a few hours.

MRS. MILDMAY, on our taking leave, said,
with the freedom of the relationship the Captain
had given her, she should expect to see him and
his young friend at her house, under the conduct
of Mr Melvin. He only bowed, and the Cap-
tain shook his head, as much as to say, “That
will be impossible!”

ITOLD

I TOLD Lydia all I had heard and seen, at my return; and dearly repented my communicativeness.—“ Was I sure it was an East — an *East-Indiaman*? “ Would to God it had been from the “ western world!” — I had touched the string by which hung all her sorrows, and her poor wounded imagination was for converting shadows into substances; as if no youth could be unhappy, no youth could be accomplished, no youth could be amiable, but the youth she loved. — I brought Melvin, Mrs. Mildmay, my brother, to confirm the impossibility it could be Wilson; offered to go and ask him in so many terms who he was; but she wept, and forbade me ever mentioning him more. I have, however, settled it with Melvin, that he shall place the matter beyond all doubt, by taking an opportunity of politely accounting for his curiosity, to know whether he has any pretensions to the name of Wilson or not. — And so I close my book on this subject, for the present.

OUR sweet rose-bud (for she shall not be called Rose, though cast in “ *Farquhar’s dramatis personæ* by the whimsicality of my imagination) was married this morning. — The following are beautiful and liberal sentiments of Gray’s Country Church-yard, in his elegy!

Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid
Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire;
Hands that the rod of Empire might have sway’d,
Or wak’d to extasy the living Lyre;

and agreeable, at the same time, to the œconomy of humanity. — Philosophers, I mean such as are not borne away by the pride of letters, or their borrowed knowledge from their predecessors, com-

sees that the human capacity is nearly the same in all; and that education does not create, it only finishes the great work. The lustre is inherent, however rough the surface. I check myself a second time; but the specimen will give you to understand how I could, if I was disposed, burst forth on this subject in a blaze of morality.

PEGGY and ROBIN (which is the point I would prove to you) are beings of a superior order. Her tenderness for him is pure as the love of angels, which I affirm to be innate delicacy; his attachment to her the most liberal that ever warmed a lover's heart; for her happiness is evidently dearer to him than his own; which I do not hesitate to pronounce the most refined and exalted principles of friendship. — To church he has led her, a pattern of neatness and simplicity; and may every happy auspice await their nuptials! — A little cottage, that Sovereigns might envy, is provided for them; and may each anniversary wedding-day they commemorate, find them as amiable and as good as they have shewn themselves this day of days!

And the lads tell the lasses, in hopes to prevail:
They're as constant as Colin that lives in the dale.

And with their union I will conclude this my variegated epistle, consisting of joy and grief, hopes and fears, wisdom and folly, friendship, love, and matrimony.

Yours, &c.

ELLA RIVERS.

LETTER XVIII.

Can there be such, and have they peace of mind!

THE poor fellows got together, the Lord knows how! on this Heath, for the national protection, instead of being put into *full feed*, as the Jockies phrase it, that they might perform wonders on the day of battle, are left a prey to harpy Agents; men who batten on the spoils of wretchedness, and pass in the world for very clever fellows, from the single merit of knowing how to accumulate.

Get money, my son, honestly if you can;
But get money,

is their motto. — O let them be banished the haunts of men! Tygers and wolves are far less rapacious than they. — Hunger is a severe task-master; it even urges to deeds of self-destruction; but your Government Contractors are of so savage a nature; that they build themselves estates, and buy themselves names, by grinding the faces of their species, and aggravating the hard lot of the lower ranks; on whose shoulders they nevertheless lay all their burthens; by whose labours alone they are enabled to riot in luxury; and on whose arm, in an hour of need, they must rest for the protection of their ill-gotten property, their liberty, their lives. — I feel myself warm with my subject; but my horror, my indignation at their conduct is too big for words. I cannot characterize them strong enough. — I cannot sufficiently point the finger of Scorn against them; but

I herewith

I herewith
vide
and h
—th
your
dom?
some
in my
the e
py w
Bu
not i
Treat
Look
repel
eat, a
—Mr
well a
he is a
here b
their g
ME
with f
an ho
Dukes
person
grace
rust in
I AM
wheref
ask. — I
govern
one in
I TO
in the
mornin
pear on

I herewith send you a sample of the bread provided by them for the subsistence of a sett of brave and honest fellows, the flower of our British youth — the bulwark of British safety — the shield of your, of mine, of every inhabitant of this kingdom's defence. — And oh that, as a punishment in some degree adequate to their crimes, it was but in my power to keep them to such hard meat for the ensuing three months! — How infinitely happy would such power render me!

BUT is it not astonishing, Government does not interfere? An ample sum is issued from our Treasury amply to provide food fit for men. — Look on the bread the soldiery, now encamped to repel the inroads of the enemy, are required to eat, and tell me, would you give it to your hogs? — Mrs. Mildmay is, however, herself on this, as well as every other occasion; and Melvin proves he is a man of humanity: — Heaven's vicegerents here below! — and Heaven will be their bright, their glorious reward.

MELVIN and Mrs. Mildmay are acquainted with some of the first personages in the Camp; an honour my father and Lydia decline; but Dukes and Duchesses are amiable and agreeable personages with me, when their minds do not disgrace their titles, or their fortunes permitted to rust in their possession.

I AM to dine this day in a ducal pavilion. — But wherefore I, of all my family? you will perhaps ask. — Because, my dear madam, humility is their governing principle — sauciness mine — and every one in their humour, the *ton* of the Camp.

I TOLD you there were Serjeant Kites enough in the field. — Making our polite tour the other morning (for you are Nobody, if you do not appear on horseback in the field at morning-exercise), I perceived

I perceived a great fellow, at the head of a little handful of new recruits, teaching them the use of their arms. We had scarcely rode by, before a clamour of voices induced us to turn our heads, when we beheld a decent country-woman, about fifty years old, endeavouring to break from the hold of a countryman, her friend. — “ I will come at him ! — I will tear the fellow’s eyes out that trepanned him ! “ — Why, John Atkins, John Atkins, have you “ no bowels to stand by and see your mother used thus ? ”

SERGEANT KITE was too much accustomed to such sights to be interrupted by them in his duty. He commanded Away, and the young lads obeyed ; nor could I distinguish which, of all the little groupe, was the good woman’s son.

MELVIN, who was of our party, made the serjeant understand he wished him to desist exercising : he accordingly, with all suitable dignity, bid them ground their firelocks. The country-woman was now no longer to be kept within bounds. She flew to her boy, bedewed him with her tears, and all a mother’s anguish seemed to rend her heart. I felt myself much affected : nature finds the way to nature’s feelings. I advanced, and begged leave to ask the poor woman a question.

“ He was the kindest-souled lad on earth, she said, till the Devil, in a human shape, tempted him to leave his master and his mother to fight for the King. She wished the King was there, she would give him his own. A parent was not less a parent, for being poor ; and he had children enough to teach him to be soft-natured to his subjects. — But she would uphold it, he knew nought of the doings of those listing fellows, who bewitched young lads, and got them to buy a red

coat

coat with the heart's-blood of their mothers, whereof they ought to be hung up as high as ever Haman was."

MELVIN asked the serjeant how the matter was.—"Why," said Kite, putting himself in attitude, "an' please your Honour, the young lad has good gentleman-like blood in his veins, and wished to serve the King; whereupon I nailed him to his wish. Your Honour sees how I am abused for so doing."

THE good woman was for flying at Kite, as he declared it, to tear his eyes out, for the *most* *basest* and the *most* *deceivingsst* fellow on earth. — The youth was next called upon to speak; and it appeared, that, like Captain Shandy, his heart had always flown out at the beating of a drum, from an impulse Heaven had implanted therein; that he had offered himself, as Kite represented, for a soldier; and that if his mother would only be content, he should be quite happy.

WE rode back with her to my father's marriage, and used every possible argument to reconcile her to her son's conduct; but without effect, until I happened to let drop, that I believe there would be no war at last. She looked upon me for a second; then wiping her eyes said, "God's will be done! — It was, to be sure, no great matter whether the boy was here, or whether he was there, provided there was no fighting: but to have him smashed to pieces before the mouth of a cannon was *grevious*, and would as surely be the death of her, as ever she was born."

WE gave her a glass of generous wine, and an invitation to call upon us once a-week, so long as we were in Camp. Melvin put half a-crown in her hand, and directed her to her son's tent, to converse with him without restraint; but told her, she

she must be more of an English-woman than to try to make a coward of him. — She curtsied at every word ; blessed our ladyships a thousand times for our goodness to a poor body like she, that might have dropped down for want of refreshment before thousands would have taken pity on her, as we had done ; and I felt, myself quite as well satisfied as if I had received the benediction of a Bishop. But though we thus contrived to cheer this honest creature's spirits, and reconcile her to the absence of her child, the serjeant, I could perceive, was as arrant a Kite as ever bore a halberd. — When things come a cross one in the manner this did, it is impossible to deny them a hearing ; otherwise I ask no questions, for conscience-sake, lest I should be drummed off the Heath, for a *somenter* of discontent in the troops.

I KNOW not how my Camp-adventures may amuse you, — but I can only write on what I am acquainted with — As for the world and all its vanities, its bustlings, its contentions, we disdain to think of it : our martial affairs and-martial characters engross our whole attention ; and so much do we feel our own consequence — we that have fathers, brothers, lovers in the field—that we overlook what is called the *civil* part of Society, and deem them only fit for vegetation ; though our top-sails would be finely lowered, if the French did attempt an invasion. — I fly the thought, and hasten to subscribe myself

Yours, &c.

ELLA RIVERS.

L E T

LETTER XIX.

Reason thus with Life : If I do lose thee,
I'd lose a thing which none but fools would keep.

IN short, my dear madam, you now have me almost as splenetic as your sweet self. The lights and shades of existence, when a tolerable balance is preserved between them, have a fine and beautiful effect ; but when dark shadows alone are visible, not a gilded cloud left to cheer the imagination, our spirits droop—we lose our fast holds—we welcome dissolution.

WILSON is dead !—Poor Melvin was the messenger of the melancholy tidings, in consequence of the enquiry I put him upon making with the stranger.

His friend indeed, the Captain, was gone to London, before he had an opportunity of revisiting Chatham, and the ship had proceeded up the River, with the stranger on board : but on mentioning the affair to another friend of his who lately come over from the American continent, he was informed that soon after the poor unfortunate Wilson's elopement from his father, he was taken by a party of Indians in friendship with the Congress, who, in hopes of reward, brought his scalp (I shudder to write it) as an evidence of his being slain ; though they affirmed they would have taken him alive, if he had not resisted.

Now, then, all is at an end ! and may Lydia cease to weep, since she must weep in vain !—Uncertainty tortured, this news has stabbed her heart ; but I hope the wound will not be mortal.

Had he been a husband, the most tender and amiable of husbands, she must have resigned him. I am, my dear, for picking comfort even out of misfortune. She is no longer a widow bewitched; and who knows what title may do towards bending her mind favourably, where some other man of merit is concerned?

DEATH is, however, at present the dreary object on which her thoughts are fixed.

To die is landing on some peaceful shore,
Where never billows beat, or tempests roar:
E'er well we feel the friendly stroke—'tis o'er,
Eases the Lover, sets the Captive free,
And, though a tyrant, offers Liberty.

THE heart, on some occasions, must be left to itself, and can best work out its own cure. To soothe in the first paroxysms of grief, is to oppose the discharge of the weight under which we are sinking: great judgment, therefore, as well as great tenderness, is necessary in the exercise of the condoling art; to take our sorrows at their ebb, to suit the constitutional humour of the patient, and know how to be silent when the flood returns again.

YOU know not what a complete mistress I am of this art; and my Lydia shall reap the benefit of it. She is now sitting in the lumber-tent, in all the luxury of solitude and tears. I will drop in upon her, as by accident; seem ready to retire, if she does not wish me to stay; follow her lead, on whatever subject she may start; weep with her till she, for my sake, desists weeping; shew her how much my health and happiness is in her hands—a generous mind will go great lengths

to serve a friend; — and thus will I steal her from herself, until she may be trusted with the secret motives of my conduct; — not to tax her gratitude, but incite her to finish the work I have begun, by shewing her her own power, if she will but exert it.

WHEN a chain there is in human events — To think that our going on board an Indianman should lead to this important discovery; that from the East we should learn (as it were) intelligence from the West! — Poor Wilson! His fate was an untimely one! — Youth, beauty, valour, virtue, all levelled at a stroke! — Death makes no distinction; will not suspend his fatal dart, be the pleadings as forcible as they may;

— Or hears the hawk, when Philomela sings; — the grand enemy of our nature; and in what stage of our existence is it that we can call ourselves secure from his attacks? He humbles the pride of prosperity, and lays the hopes of the ambitious in the dust. — But perhaps you will tell me, that though this may be very fine writing, it is nothing else; and that you wish me to stick to business, or history.

BUT soft, if you please, my dearest madam! — I am no fabulist. — The age of chivalry and the reign of giants is at an end. I am a mere matter-of-fact woman: but if fiction is your taste, you shall find me a genius. You remind me of my engagement at a ducal marriage — I am your most humble servant, and am now setting myself in array to give you your desired satisfaction.

YOU people of quality, as they are at the top of every thing in dress, in fashionable knowledge, &c. &c. so when they happen to be per-

sons of good-nature and good understanding; they excel all others in good-breeding; at least the *deuxes* of behaviour, which in them are so many condescensions, are so engaging, so winning, that they may command the affections of all who know them.

A YOUNG Duchess, whose motto is supposed to be,

Youth's the season made for joy,

has a heart, nevertheless, formed for every social enjoyment. She no sooner understood who I was, than approaching me with an air of long acquaintance, she told me she considered me as the first woman in the company: — “Not, fair lady,” continued she, “from any merit of your own — “for that must be a future consideration — but “from being the daughter of the most experienced Officer in the field; and did I possess “any court-interest, I would soon speak him “into the rank he is entitled to.”

I was softened; it was a tender string; but I was at the same time delighted. No flattery could have been so insinuating, no incense more grateful; and I own, I became ambitious for a humble share in her good opinion.

SOME time, after, having gazed on me a few moments, with the greatest good-humour in her face, — “I suppose,” said she, “you would “have us look upon your mode of dressing as a “token of your humility; but the deception will “not pass: it is, *studied* elegance, calculated to “put the labours of the toilette out of countenance. — What say you, my Lord, (turning to “a man of fashion who sat next her) to bring “a Bill into your Honourable House, for all “men to follow her example! Don't you think

"the Public (the wiser part of it I mean) would be vastly obliged to you?"

MELVIN was in such raptures on the occasion, that I expected him to dance a hornpipe.

DURING our dinner, which was splendid, and, for the honour of the donor be it mentioned, the remnants of which were given to the poor men who happened to be on duty, we had the finest concert of martial music I ever heard performed in my life; the tunes were so happily chosen, the variations so beautiful, and the whole so exquisitely executed: but it was winding up the soul to the utmost pitch of rational delight; it was touching the highest key-note of harmony; it was — I verily believe, what I shall never taste again; nor can I wonder

The World's Victor stood subdued by sound, at the famous Alexandrian feast; a feast of immortal memory.

TOASTS were then given; amongst the number of which, a fluttering little damsel gave Lord Brazen; so that even lord Brazen, my dear, has his admirers. Who shall then be so sinful as to despair?

MELVIN's mind was so sweetly attuned by the honours and distinctions paid to his fair mistress, that he sung like a nightingale, at the first word. To say the truth, I never saw him such good company; and it is far from a disagreeable circumstance to have a man improve on acquaintance.

MRS. MILD MAY gave the whole groupe an invitation to her house, which was accepted, to an individual: we have not, therefore, parted like men without hope of seeing each other more.

Melvin, a silly fellow I will needs be his feast too; so that we have the prospect of eating and drinking from one end of the Camp to the other: but we have nothing else to do, and little else to think of, but passing time as merrily off our hands as possible, and leave the events of futurity in the hands of Providence.

IN mixed company, you and I have often observed it, there occurs small matters for the exercise of the finer feelings.—Art, much rather than Nature, takes the lead. The wit is little better than polite snip, snap, and the whole conversation, a medley of fashionable chit-chat; and I have reason to believe, the higher we go in life, the more the observation will hold good.

MANY pleasant things were certainly hit off in the course of the day I am describing; but then they were in the lump (a very unlady-like expression, I grant you;) and I am not sufficiently dexterous to be able to separate the ore from the dross. Being, therefore, satisfied this is not the ground I am born to shine upon—as you know peers, and peers know you—I shall leave the How and the What to your own imagination; only claiming an exception in my Duchess's favour, whose every smile had meaning, had distinction in it, and every word bespoke the woman of breeding and sensibility.

TAKE notice, this is one of my laboured epistles.—Simplicity is my forte—nature my darling original; do me the justice to allow me, at least, to be a very tolerable copyist.

I am, &c.

ELLA RIVERS!

L E T.

LETTER XX.

Take physic, Pomp

Expose thyself to feel what wretches feel,
That thou mayst shake the superflux to them,
And shew the Gods more just.

NUMBERS of the poor men are ill! — Oh, my dear, had you once seen the inside of a military hospital, as I have seen it, how would you join with me in execrating the wretches who multiply misfortune on misfortune by their cruel rapine!

HOSPITALS, I grant you, are necessary, are happy receptacles for the sick; and the surgeons now in camp with us want neither skill or humanity; but custom hardens the heart, nurses grow mendacious, the drooping head wants its smoothed pillow, the parched lips refreshing moisture oftener, much oftener in hospitals, than in any earthly situation: besides, all which, there are such things as *sexcomb*, pupils, *butchering-assistants*, who can cut and hack their species only to try experiments; and if there is one infernal punishment worse than another, it will surely fall on their heads.

MRS. MILDMAY has made them a present of a ventilator of a new construction, and we went to see it worked. She, moreover, has got leave to put two women in at her own expence, who are supplied with a certain quantity of bread each succeeding day from the Hall, to be given indiscriminately to those who can eat. But the hospital, dreadful as it now appears to me, is a sovereignty,

verignty, I am told, to what a change of season will render it; when whole companies of poor fellows will be attacked with the usual disorders of a camp—fevers, sore throats, agues, with many melancholy, &c. &c.

BUT surely, at the present critical time, when men are so hard to be got, the Government will take care of those already entered into their service, and suffer the poor fellows to go into winter-quarters, before it becomes dangerous, not to say fatal, to sleep in the open air as it were: for the damps penetrate every crevice of the tents, and the cloth awnings are a poor defence against diseases, when the element is impregnated with them, and we inhale them with every breath we draw.

THESE are matters, however, that strike not upon the minds of the spectators, who look upon a Camp as children do upon a raree-show—a most pleasureable scene; and think it a hardship to stay at home in peace and plenty. Such false judgments do common minds form on most public occasions!

NEWS-PAPERS are, moreover, calculated to inflame the passions, and feed the errors of all ranks of people. All is mirth and festivity! never once remembering, that the parade of Majesty itself often covers an aching heart;—that the bustles of a Camp are a veil for its misery, as martial music is intended to shield the ear from piercing groans in the day of battle. This, all this is the *chicane* of existence; and happy are they who live and die without detecting the cheat. It is fatal, in some cases, to push our enquiries too far; though it is difficult to draw the line, except by those of slow feelings or constitutional discretion.—I hope I make myself understood, when

when
fells t
M
who
Thing
and fl
oppre
the h
time
enqui
on he
are un
sidera
TH
a wor
tained
they
reform
dastry
what
ing, a
FEI
offere
solved
lunt
teres,
destiny
paign,
had sp
nerous
then th
May i
could
vers.
I ex
able to
ceive,

when I reason thus *profoundly*; though, to confess the truth, I frequently puzzle myself.

MRS. MILD MAY is one of those quick spirits who cannot stop to develop the arcana of life. Things, with her, are either right or wrong; and she goes to the bottom of them at once. The oppressed must be relieved, the sinking supported, the hungry fed, and that on the instant: it is time enough afterwards, she insists upon it, to enquire into their merits. The good are retained on her list, and, having once tasted her bounty, are understood to have claims to her further consideration.

THE bad are made sensible they have robbed a worthier being of the benefits they have obtained; but that, as it is never too late to mend, they shall not want any proper assistance in the reformation of their manners, or adoption of industry. Hence it would be endless to tell you what an angel of peace, of repentance, of saving, and of rewarding, she is in society.

FERDINAND has had another pair of Colours offered to him, but has again declined. He is resolved to serve his Majesty, this campaign, a volunteer. He should rank too near a father he reveres, and perhaps wound him by the partial destiny of a young man, who, in his first campaign, could rise next in command to him who had spent two-thirds of his life in the field. — Generous Ferdinand! — But we dare not tell my father this, lest he should disapprove our conduct. May it prove a wholesome rebuke to those who could neglect such a man as poor Lieutenant Rivers.

I EXPECT this piece of news should be agreeable to you. A soldier's life his not, I can perceive, my brother's choice; but he must quit it

with honour. A period of peace will enable him to start on what ground he pleases: he must not desert the service in war, unless you wish him to be marked down for a poltroon.

I do think Lydia begins to be more resigned; but her father is now the whole world to her. She is his never-failing companion: let who will make parties, you leave her and find her at the paternal side, and she seems to have broke hands with the world.

This is, however, a good first step, a happy diversion of her mind from its melancholy contemplations. Her father is a grave, not a dejected man; his conversation, though not laughable, is highly entertaining; he has all the softness of our sex, with all the manliness of his own; and will insensibly communicate lessons of fortitude and of resignation to her heart — blighted in her earliest bloom. But the difference, I fear, is, that her heaven is not upon earth, but in the bright mansions of eternity, where sorrow shall be no more, and patient suffering receive its crown of glorious immortality.

If it were not for this allay, I can foresee this headlong vivacity of mine would betray me into a million of little inconveniencies; but when I feel any malicious or any giddy propensity stirring in my bosom, I think of Lydia's sorrows, and am regulated in an instant.

MELVIN has had a fine time of it, on her account; for, do you know, madam, I am naturally a coquet; that is, I love to put the liberality of the masculine heart to the test. — He is no husband for me, who could doubt either my prudence or my sincerity in a single instance. Jealousy is the mark of a mean and a narrow soul;

and she who can be flattered, deserves to be enslaved by it; deserves to be led about in its chains, like Bajazet in his cage, and never sleeping or waking, be able to withdraw herself from the eye of suspicion.

THE man who is capable of forming designs on a woman for treating him like a friend, is a reptile, and should be spurned accordingly. Frankness and levity are as opposite and as distinguishable as the elements; and I pity — I recall that word — I despise the ignorant, the uninformed soul, which does not know them at first sight on the spot, and does not square his conduct thereby.

FERDINAND is quite a milkop! — So many tyres as have been thrown out to him — so glaringly, so invitingly thrown out — he might surely be allowed to amuse himself with saying soft things at such a distance without offence, one would imagine, to your imperial Majesty. — But no: he moves along as if every thought of his heart was naked and open before you, and that he must blush to be detected in this, or descend to equivocation to defend that, and preserve your good opinion. Hold him then for what he is, the choicest of all choice swains, a miracle of constancy, a — but he is Ferdinand Rivers, and your most devoted servant; and, should the avenue my father intends at be once happily opened, with the pen of ready writer would he tell you as much, though he could not with more sincerity than myself assure you of his unaltered and unalterable affection:

ELLA RIVERS.

L E T.

LETTER XXI.

MY father is grown quite gay; lets off his his *bons mots*, and appears to be the happiest man in the creation. He put Mrs. Mildmay into her coach last night with all the gallantry imaginable. — “Was I general Officer, (said he) madam, I would tell you what pleasure your company gives me; though, believe me, not a Generalissimo could taste it more sensibly than myself.”

“It is the Camp air (said Mrs. Mildmay,) that is beginning to operate, my good sir, on your spirits. It always exhilarates mine, and that makes me your so frequent visitant. I will not ask you, therefore, to let us see you at Mildmay-Hall!”

THE dear amiable woman could not conceal her feelings: it was, my Caroline, the only gallant thing he had ever said to her since my mother's death. “You can have no notion, Ella,” said she, as we went home, “what an agreeable fellow your father was in the days of his youth; and had he been easy in his circumstances, I have often thought your mother would have been the most enviable woman upon earth. — But did you observe the poor Thing's stroke of vivacity?”

“I DID, madam, and was agreeably surprised at it.”

“How it became him! — He looked for once, Ella, like himself! — He was exceedingly handsome before he received all his ugly

“wounds

“wo
“dis
“Sh
worth
hide
fancie
her fo
my vo
Mr
vivaci
me re
in mu
Hone
tray u
vowed
able c
was t
take e
tremel
once t
bled w
LY
poor L
wished
Bu
my su
holds
standly
the car
work,
web.
come t
Nex
stands
prise y
not all
Ferdin

"wounds, and had his heart broke down by
"distress and disappointments."

SHE sighed, and pretended to see somewhat
worth her notice at her window; but she did not
hide her sensibility from me, dexterous as she
fancied she was at finesse.—I wish my father had
her fortune. She should soon be Mrs. Rivers, if
my voice could make her so.

MELVIN was asked the next day, if his friend's
vivacity was lost upon him.—It was.—She bid
me repeat it.—I begged to be excused, as it was
in much better hands. She blushed—hesitated—
Honest Conscience, what blunders dost thou be-
tray us into?—but got it out at last.—Melvin
vowed abruptly, they would make the most ami-
able couple on earth.—I was frightened; but it
was too pleasurable a subject, to allow her to
take exceptions at trifles. She laughed it off ex-
tremely well, for a first attempt; and the ice
once broke, I shall never be so abundantly trou-
bled with my delicacies again, as I have been.

LYDIA, Ferdinand, every one was told of the
poor Lieutenant's *gaieté de cœur*, and every one
wished it might continue.

BUT what is to be done?—Should I mention
my suspicions to my father, of the interest he
holds in Mrs. Mildmay's affections, he would in-
stantly shrink back into his reserve, and you know
I cannot ask him. Well, let Nature do her own
work, I say; and Destiny weave the necessary
web.—I repeat it, if it is their destiny, they will
come together at last.

NEXT to my father, it is my opinion Melvin
stands highest in her favour.—Melvin!—I sur-
prise you.—Why so, my dear madam? We do
not all see with the same eyes.—She confesses
Ferdinand is a very pretty fellow, but he wants
animation;—

animation; — and she has not the same reason as yourself to be pleased with him on that account.

I ADVISED Melvin, on our first acquaintance, to carry his *dewoirs* to my benefactress; — but he was not ambitious, and chose to stop short at her humble friend. But I now find it would have been to no purpose; for Rivers is the man of men, in her estimation. — I, for my part, honour her for her taste; for were I not his child, I would tell you, I never saw his superior yet, and seldom his equal. Ferdinand, you may remember, is very like him. — Apropos of Ferdinand; he had the modesty, the other day, to ask me to indulge him with a sight of your letters. — They would amuse him, and he would guard them as his dearest treasure.

BUT, my dear Sir, (said I) “will that be acting the part of a friend — nay, of a woman of honour — to betray a confidential correspondence?” So we settled it, that I should ask your leave, and having no letters but dolorous ones in my hands, I hereby conjure you to write me such a one as is fit to shew a young soldier and a lover, at the distance of a hundred miles from his mistresses.

THOUGH, by the bye, I don’t like the request; and think I ought to acquaint my father with it, as it is an infringement of articles, an act of indirect disobedience. But, as Mrs. Mildmay says, it is the Camp air which affects, which softens him; and he languishes to read of you, since he must not hear from you. Take notice, I shall impatiently expect your orders; for your orders shall be my rule of conduct. Adieu,

Mon enfant,

Et croyez-moi toujours

Votre tres-cher

ELLA RIVERS.

LET

LETTER XXII.

Adieu to grief, and jealous fear,
Love and Harmony dwell here!

A GRAND exercise brought us again to the camp early yesterday morning. What a noble sight it was! Nor am I clear which deserved most applause, the Commanders or common men; but to do justice to both, they appeared all perfectly well-disciplined, and no less able than willing to guard their Country from invasion.

We adjourned to my father's tent, to breakfast, where Lydia waited our arrival; for she would not be prevailed on to take an airing, though my benefactress offered to go herself in the coach she had brought for her accommodation, and send back our horses. The gentlemen soon joined us.

Mr. RIVERS was as gallant as on our parting, an evening or two ago, proper notice of which you received in my last; said the Heath had done more towards the improvement of the ladies complexions, than all the imports from France in the last half century: he had not for many years beheld so many blooming cheeks. — "Nor is your countenance, madam," added he, addressing Mrs. Mildmay, "less indebted than your neighbours to air and exercise" — Mrs. Mildmay was his very humble servant.

"But, Captain Melvin," said my father, turning kindly towards him, "methinks we might have hoped for an invitation to your tent before this time."

"If

"If I could have flattered myself," returned Melvin, "that Mr. Rivers would have done me the honour—"

"This is a droll way, my young friend, of paying court to the ladies."

"My dear Sir," cried Melvin, "there could be no happiness without you. We have but one mind in this friendly circle, one sentiment on that subject."

"COMMAND me then," said my father, "I shall be pleased to attend you."

"It is a fine thing," said Mrs. Mildmay, "to be a favourite! I have invited my old acquaintance to Mildmay-Hall for successive months; yet has he never once condescended to take it in his route. We will not receive him now, Ella, if he would offer to come to-morrow."

"If I do not accept that challenge, madam, I am a Turk; and my Lydia shall for once, be her father's second."

Thus humourously did he make an engagement that delighted us all, — and will be the first poor Lydia has entered into since her arrival at Camp. We shall fetch them ourselves in the morning.

I BEGGED Mrs. Mildmay, as we returned home, to ride in front of the huts occupied by the women and children; — and we were infinitely entertained. A boy in petticoats — the loveliest you can imagine, and clean as a silver penny — ran out, and told one of the servants, (a young lady) he would fight him, and tie one hand behind him. We called him to us, and asked him what he would be. "A Corporal," he replied, as his "Daddy was. But stop a moment, says he, and you shall see me exercise."

A NOVEL.

INTO the hut he went, and returned on the instant with a small crab-stick: then with the most graceful air and martial deportment, he not only gave the word of command, but performed every manœuvre of common exercise.

"YOU ought," said Mrs. Mildmay, "at least to be a Captain."

"WHERE is your mother?" demanded I.

"WITHIN, with the babes."

"WHAT! young babes?"

"THE old woman," he said, "brought them to her yesterday morning."

"WE will alight," said my (and every body's) benefactors, "and look at them."

THERE she was—as neat as hands could make her—stretched out on a straw bed, but comfortably fortified with blankets, and two of the sweetest infants (boys) I ever beheld, in her arms.

"HAVE you no one to take care of you?" said Mrs. Mildmay.

HER neighbours.

"AND what have you to subsist upon?"

"WATER-GRUEL."

SHE gave the little soldier five shillings, and we departed.—"We will bring her some better provisions, Ella, in the morning."

As we passed on, a girl about nineteen years old caught, and fixed our attention. She had been led to the door of the hut, and was there seated for a little air. Sickness and sorrow sat on her cheek.

WE asked her disorder.

"SHE believed a consumption."

"How long had she been in camp?"

"NINE weeks."

"Was she in health at her arrival there?"

TEARS

COXHEATH

TEARS started in her eyes. — "not perfect health."

"LET me not pain you," said Mrs. Mildmay, "I only wish to know how to be serviceable to you."

SHE could not contain herself, but wept bitterly. — "I have not," said she, "a friend on earth, nor do I deserve one! — A father's curse hangs over my head! — But it was, in some degree, his own fault that I followed the poor fellow I am now with; for he turned me out of doors because I would not promise not to think of him, after an acquaintance of many months; and here I now am in the most forlorn of all conditions."

"Is he kind to you?"

"He was kindness itself," she said. "But what could a poor young fellow do? — Her appetite for coarse meats was gone, and he had not wherewith to buy better. — If she was once dead, it would be happy for him: it broke his heart to see her dying by inches."

"ARE you married?" said Mrs. Mildmay.

SHE shook her head. — "Not in the sight of man," she replied, "so soon as she could speak; but in the sight of God; and they neither of them wished for better luck than to be able to have all things right between them."

"BUT you must get well," said Mrs. Mildmay, "or it will be to little purpose whether you are married or not as to this world."

"AH, madam!" cried she, "all my distress is to know how our not being married will stand against me in the next."

MRS. MILD MAY told her, "God knew the heart, and the uprightness of its intentions; that it was certainly her duty to be married, if she lived."

red ; but if she died, earnestly intending it, she need not fear condemnation with Heaven : — for Heaven always accepted the will to do good.”

If she was sure of that, it would be more than half her cure : but a Clergyman had told her, she was a strumpet ; and that strumpets must not hope to enter into the kingdom of heaven.”

“ Who was this rigid piece of divinity ? ”

“ A dignified gentleman, who had a living in Kent, and took frequent airings to the death. The women laughed at her, indeed, for finding him ; but they were not dying, as she was. Besides, they had learned not to care about other people’s words or behaviour, and shocked her by their talk, when ever they came near her.”

“ This is a second Annetts,” whispered Mrs. Mildmay : “ I wish I could see her Lubin.”

THE young fellow was then at the door, trembling for the consequence of our visit. I perceived him, and told Mrs. Mildmay, who bid him come in, with that gracious look of her’s, which set every heart at ease, and encourages the utmost droopings of distressed nature.

“ He was nineteen, also — born and bred in the same parish, with Annette, (for so Mrs. Mildmay will have her called) and loved her from his cradle. — He was by trade a shoemaker ; but trading very dead, he was tempted to enlist, in which he should have got his Annette to marry ; but whilst his bounty-money lasted, for marriage was a chargeable thing to the poor. — Annette was agreeable, and they put up the banns accordingly ; — when comes her father, egged on by her cruel step-mother (who was afraid she would lose her drudge,) and forbids them in the face of the whole congregation.

“ Ha !

HE was at his wits end to leave Annette behind; but it must surely have been the case, if so be her father had not turned her out of doors, in one of his desperate passions, for loving a soldier:—and he got her in the mind to come to Camp;—and if she had not fell sick, no one would have been happier than they.”

“MY poor young thing!” said Mrs. Mildmay, “look upon me, and believe me your friend. Annette wants nothing more than ease of mind, and comfortable food to raise her. I have a woman in my parish who is a tender, good nurse: let her then come for one month, and I will be bound for it, you shall receive her back safe and sound—and your lawful wife too, without costing you a single farthing.”

“CAN you be such an angel of goodness?” cried the young fellow, blubbing with doubtful joy. “Can you have pity on us?—We are not wicked, we are only poor.—Annette, what say you to her Ladyship?—Can we ever thank her for so bountiful goodness enough?—But she wants no thanks; and God will reward her.”

ANNETTE wiped her eyes:—“It was God’s Providence; and she would go wherever the Lady pleased, and do whatever she bid her; and would never forget the manifold favour.”

A LITTLE garden chair was sent over for her in the afternoon; she was put in instant possession of her new lodging; and I doubt not in a single week will be restored to health, now her consuming sorrow is no more.

BUT what will the World say to all this?—A woman of honour, and purity, and character and fortune, to interest herself in the affairs of a confessedly-fallen girl; a girl living in the open practice of sin; declaredly loving her seducer

may,
crime
she wa
friend
gling.

But
that of
with a
despica
has all
pastur
the nur
young
the cas
excuse
title or
membe

ANY
made a
to her
can re
olate th
the alta

BUT
as my
capabl
credit
tified v
In spite
and th
nette is
continu
are all
cupatio
up, em
acquain
occasion

may, charging herself with the largest share of the crime: "for seeing she was turned out of doors, she was resolved (she said) he should be her only friend, and so went with him, after a little boggling."

BUT Mrs. Mildmay knows no distinction but that of goodness in the individual. A Countess with a bad heart, is, in her estimation, a bad, a despicable woman; and innocence in a cottager has all the merit of innocence; nay, every departure from the *strict* line, in the uninformed, the unsuspecting, the otherwise well-intending young creature, has every allowance the nature of the case demands; though she cannot find a single excuse for the gallantry of the times, or allow a title or fortune to be a sponge for vice in any one member of the community.

ANNETTE, therefore, in her opinion, will be made a much honest woman, by being married to her Lubin, than all the Acts of Parliament can render those who, under their sanction, violate the most solemn of vows, and re-approach the altar of the Deity to enter into new ones.

BUT I need not labour this point: you, as well as myself, know how to pity the errors we are capable of falling into; and, instead of claiming credit for not being *contemptible*, are amply satisfied with the testimony of our own consciences. In spite, however, of all the clamours of chastity, and the outcries of superabundant nicety, Annette is now under our protection, and shall be continued under our protection, until *the wars are all over*, and her Lubin can return to his occupation of a shoemaker, when we will set him up, employ him, and recommend him to all our acquaintance. I adopt the royal stile on all these occasions; but alas! the *we* must be resolved into

into the *shop*; for it is Mrs. Mildmay's purse that pays for all.

Mrs. MILDMAI desired a list might be made out of such women as had children in Camp; that she might occasionally send a few gallons of milk amongst them; and at least, perhaps, for two or three shoulders of veal, if they could dress them.

"O, THEY could dress every thing! They had pots, kettles, and all conveniencies, if it would please the Lord to send them some such good victuals;" — and we came away amidst the huzzas of a little army of boys and girls from two to five years old, who strained their innocent throats, and spread out their hands in thankfulness, as far as they could see us, — nor will she fail to fulfil the strictest letter of her promise to them.

ANOTHER, the next day, was being carried to her cabin, when all the Acts of Parliament were read to her. **I am ever your**

But I need not part this point: you will know how to put the rest of the story into a chapter of *History*, and, in the concluding words, let me say, **ELLA RIVERS.**

What I need not part this point: you will know how to put the rest of the story into a chapter of *History*, and, in the concluding words, let me say, **ELLA RIVERS.**

What I need not part this point: you will know how to put the rest of the story into a chapter of *History*, and, in the concluding words, let me say, **ELLA RIVERS.**

What I need not part this point: you will know how to put the rest of the story into a chapter of *History*, and, in the concluding words, let me say, **ELLA RIVERS.**

What I need not part this point: you will know how to put the rest of the story into a chapter of *History*, and, in the concluding words, let me say, **ELLA RIVERS.**

What I need not part this point: you will know how to put the rest of the story into a chapter of *History*, and, in the concluding words, let me say, **ELLA RIVERS.**

L E T T E R XXIII.

OUR guests are departed; my father, Lydia, Melvin, and Ferdinand;—and never did I pass a happier day!—I knew the good-natured motive by which the gaiety of a certain gentleman was called forth:—

“My Lydia will, I hope, soon follow her father’s example,” I said he at dinner. “His grief cannot be more severe, then loss greater, than he has sustained. I am now, however, convinced, there is no life but cheerful life; and can only lament I did not make the discovery earlier. No one should have been cheerfuller than me!—An accident revealed the secret to me; I have tasted its sweets; and you see, madam, (to Mrs. Mildmay) what a change it has produced in me. How many years is it since you heard me sing *Thought Chloe’s out of fashion!*—But I recollect the number too well to give you the trouble of telling me; and, with your leave, will surprise my children by a repetition of it on this occasion.”

You have often, my dear madam, admired his voice in conversation; judge then, if you can, how agreeably it must strike on the ear, when musically exerted. I don’t remember I was ever better entertained, the novelty of the thing was so truly charming.

MELVIN and Lydia (for I am not afraid of rusting him any where, or with any person) walk into the garden.

THAT

"THAT poor, amiable girl," said my father, "affects me unspeakably!—The youth she laments was worthy her utmost esteem, her highest friendship!—I loved him as if he had been my own child!—but he must learn to submit our will to the will of Providence!—I have obligations, moreover, to her tenderness I can never forget. She has shared, she has lightened every burthen! Heaven has been pleased to lay on my shoulders:—can I therefore do less than strain a point for the mitigation of her sorrows?—You will all, I am persuaded, join me in such a cause. We will raise her drooping spirits, cheer her into resignation, and to Mrs. Mildmay's benevolence I shall be indebted no less for the saving of this poor girl, than for the protection of Ella."

THEY returned before any reply could be made to this address, a little shower having obliged them to defer their intention; and a new subject was started, till we had finished our coffee, when we went to the billiard-room, and played for a couple of hours; a room that was never profaned by gambling, but is sacred to innocent relaxation alone.

I FIND my father could have married very advantageously in Jamaica, both when a bachelor, and since he has been a widower: but Mrs. Mildmay says, "he was too proud to participate the fortune even of a woman he must be sensible could not enjoy it without that participation.—What became of his good-sense and generosity, on such occasions, she would not take upon her to say."

"You altogether mistake my conduct, madam," replied my father: "I have none of that false pride in my composition. I have felt how love exalts its object. Had I possessed a

"diadem,

"diadem
"every
"had
"pose
"tion
"oblig
"with
"super
"Mrs.
"is it wo
"I wa
"view of
"several
"by the
"a confid
"others,
"to break
"out of
"them no
"dent to
"to the w
"Sr
"it is t
"by th
"—my
"I bro
"could
"wrote
"tain,
"small
"the b
"He wa
"lemen v
"for him,
"ceived,
"his scull
"knowing
"VOL.

“diadem, I should have thought it misplaced on every head but my Lydia’s; and believe she had the same feelings for me: therefore, suppose of me as you please, I should with exultation have consented to have been as much the obliged party in point of fortune, on my union with that dear woman, as I was in every other superiority she bestowed upon me.”

Mrs. MILD MAY had pushed this subject as far as it would go.

I WAS seated at a window, which commanded a view of the front-gate; about which I perceived several persons gathered.—It was presently opened by the Porter, and I could distinguish, though at a considerable distance, a man borne by four others, as dying, or dead. It went to my heart to break in upon the sunshine we enjoyed; but out of tenderness to the whole company, I bid them not to be surprised if they heard of an accident to some unfortunate stranger.—They all flew to the window.

“STRANGER!” exclaimed my benefactress; “it is the worthiest poor fellow on earth, I see by the cloaths! It is Lifimore, my steward! —my family-regulator! —my humble friend! I brought him with me from Jamaica; nor could I have sustained a greater loss. Yet, wretch that I am! what is the loss I shall sustain, to the distress a beloved wife and three small children must be plunged into! He was the best husband and the best father living.”

He was now brought to the house, and the gentlemen went to enquire into what could be done for him, and the nature of the hurt he had received. He had been thrown from his horse, and his skull was fractured in two places. A surgeon, knowing who he belonged to, had followed him

home ; but declared trepanning would torture, without being of the smallest service to him, for that he could not live above a few hours.

MRS. MILDMAy besought me to go to the Lodge, where the wife and children dwelt, as in a second paradise ; and in the most prepared manner open the melancholy particulars to her.

“ You are, my dear,” said she, “ the only friend I could trust on this occasion. — Spare me !—Oblige me, then, and prevent her hearing the disastrous tale from any other quarter.”

You will do me the justice to believe, I complied unhesitatingly with this, however disagreeable, request ; for it was a truly painful embassy.

Two little girls, beautiful as cherubs, ran to meet me, calling out, “ Mamma, Miss Rivers is come !—won’t you be exceeding glad to see Miss Rivers ?”

I KISSED them both, and confess to you, I could not forbear weeping, from the consciousness of their innocent error.

MRS. LISIMORE appeared, leading her youngest child by the hand ; for he is, my dear madam, only fifteen months old ; and said many pretty obliging things on the pleasure every sight of me gave her.

“ I MUST beg leave, madam, to be seated, before I make any return to your politeness.

“ I NEVER saw Mrs. Lisimore before, but with pleasure, and I really believe our sentiments were reciprocal ; but now——

THE bloom instantly forsook her cheeks, the object nearest her heart being the first object of her care.

“ HEAVEN,”

"HEAVEN," cried she, "avert every evil from the head of poor Lisimore!"

I LOOKED down.

"I READ all the meaning of the trouble you have taken — your goodness — My poor husband! — my children!"

"FOR those dear children's sake, madam, let me beseech you to be comforted! — You are a woman of understanding, and know by how precarious a tenure what we call happiness is held in this life! — Mr. Lisimore deservedly possessed your tenderest affections, but think how many hearts are rent at this time! — Every foreign packet is fraught with death; a death preceded by a thousand sad fatigues and difficulties. — What shall I say to you, madam? — The Power that gives, has a right to take away, and the great duty of a Christian is — Christian resignation."

"HE is then dead!" said she, with a composure that shocked me.

I SAW the surgeon walking fast over the lawn; and it was settled he should follow me, the moment there was a change.

"I FEAR I have no hopes to give you," said I; "but if you would prove to me you love Mrs. Mildmay — that her repose is of any consequence with you — or her future friendship desirable — you will consent to be bled. — Here is a gentleman who can perform the salutary operation."

SHE wept bitterly — the tears of silent anguish — and sat down, unresisting, to do as I desired. I looked at the surgeon, who soon made me understand his patient was no more. — I persuaded her to go to bed, and offered to sit by her.

“ EXCUSE me, dearest madam ! I must be
 “ alone ! — It will be a relief to me to be alone !
 “ I constrain myself now, because you are pre-
 “ sent. Grief like mine shuns every eye —
 “ even the eye of goodness. Pity me—pardon me
 “ —and leave me !—Consider, Mr. Lisimore left
 “ me but a few hours ago in perfect health—he
 “ bade me wait supper for him : — our meals
 “ were all happy ones,—his good-humour, his
 “ kindness made them happy ones : — I now see
 “ him no more ! — Oh ! there must be time al-
 “ lowed to reconcile the mind to so cruel a
 “ change !”

THE servant was a good creature, and en-
 gaged to sit, without her mistress’s knowledge, in
 the next room. So soon as I sent a person to take
 care of the children, I saw her into bed ; prevail-
 ed on her to drink a composing draught the sur-
 geon happened to have in his pocket, and was
 carrying to a neighbouring patient, when the ac-
 cident happened, and we left her to the luxury of
 sorrow.

MY Father knew poor Lisimore abroad, and
 was much affected by his sudden departure ; ne-
 vertheless, for the sake of those he loved, he re-
 tained a generous portion of his chearfulness, and
 invited us to breakfast with him *en Camp* the next
 morning.

“ I HAVE never yet, Madam,” said he to
 Mrs. Mildmay, “ done myself the honour to take
 “ an airing with you on the Heath. I accepted
 “ your challenge to dine at Mildmay-Hall ; let
 “ me see, then, if you dare meet me on Cox-
 “ heath at six o’clock to-morrow morning. A
 “ corner of your coach will be a happy accom-
 “ modation for a man who cannot boast of so
 “ much as a mule to amble forth upon, Sancho
 “ Pancha

“ Pancha like, to escort the ladies the fashion-
“ able round. How many times, pray, may
“ you have reviewed us thro’ all our defiles? —
“ and what report will you make of us to our
“ Sovereign?”

“ A FAVOURABLE one, I assure you, Sir,”
replied Mrs. Mildmay. “ You are a credit to
“ the nation; and so much faith have I in the
“ prowess of you all, that were I to hear of an
“ invasion to-morrow, I should fear only for the
“ personal safety of those who engage to repel
“ it, as the successful contest is not without its
“ dangers.”

MELVIN kissed Mrs. Mildmay’s hand, like a
well-bred cavalier; and Ferdinand and my father
followed his example. She was, you know, ma-
dam, the queen of the company. — Would I could
pay my devoirs to you in a similar manner, in-
stead of subscribing myself

Your

ELLA RIVERS.

G 3

L E T.

LETTER XXIV.

POOR Lisimore is buried, and his wife and children are now on their way to Devonshire, where she has a sister married and settled. Every thing at Mildmay-Hall, she said, would renew her grief: even the tender condescension of my benefactress, the tender attentions I paid her, were so many daggers to her heart. She has left one little girl under our care, which we shall bring up to be an honour to her sex, and a blessing to society:—for will she not have *my* instructions, and Mrs. Mildmay's example, to form herself by?

WE gave the poor Lieutenant his airing, eat our breakfast with him with much sprightliness, and have enter-changed many polite visits with Melvin's acquaintance; but all these visits were so much in the likeness of what you have already received from me, that I shall only mention them in the gross, having subjects in store that deserve a new pen and a new epistle: so that, if you please, you may call this my shortest letter, as the only news it contains, is respecting poor Lisimore's family; for it is surely no news to tell you that I am most affectionately

Your, &c.

ELLA RIVERS.